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Volume 5, Number 23

December 15, 1979

Jukebox Issue

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Vol. 5, No. 22
Dec. 15, 1979

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PLAY METER

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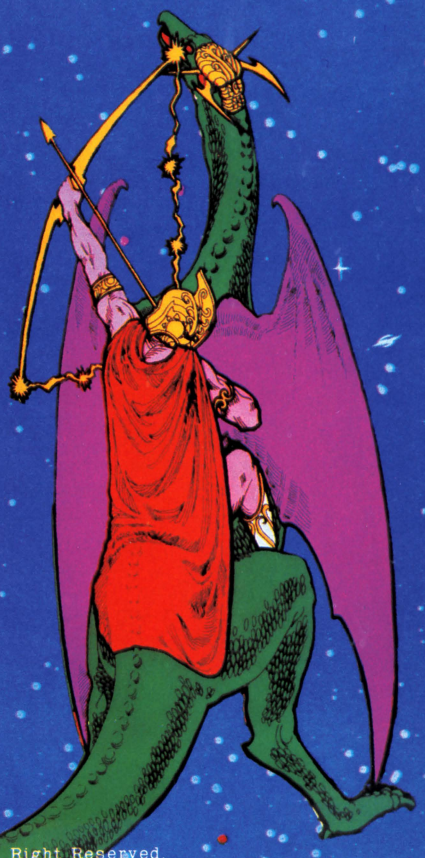

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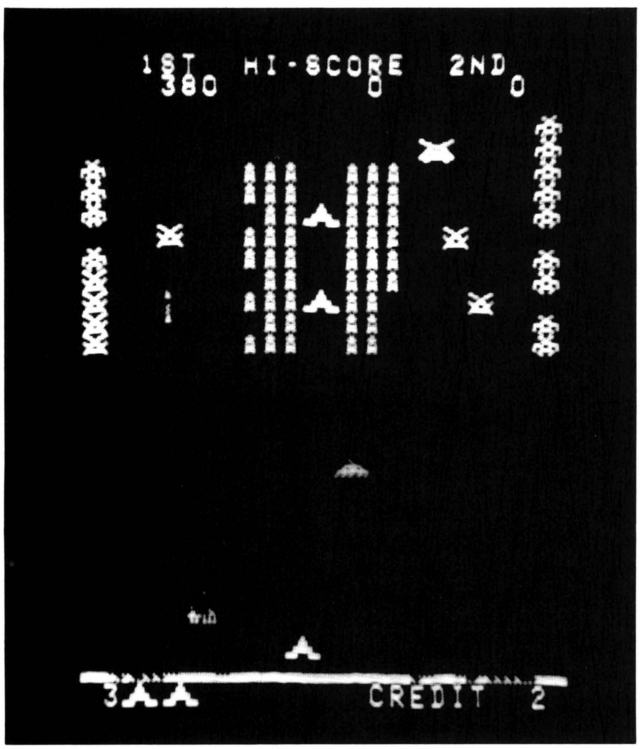
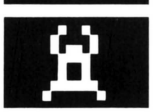
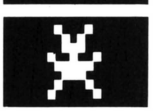


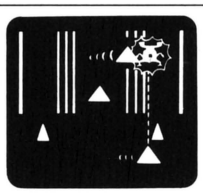
HOW TO PLAY "COSMIC GUERILLA"

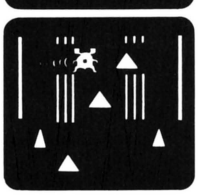
1. **SCORE DISPLAY** .....
   6-digit display from 0 – 999990.
2. **UFO** .....
   When hit, 50 – 300 points are scored.
3. **GUERILLA** .....
   The guerilla rushes towards your block from both sides to take it away while bombing. When the block disappears, he tries to take away the central laser gun to his position.
4. **BLOCK** .....
   It protects the central laser gun. If the guerilla is shot before he takes away the block, it returns to its location.
5. **BASE** .....
   It is a fortress prepared to protect your laser guns against the guerilla attack.
6. **LASER GUN** .....
   It is moved from side to side by controlling the lever, and by pressing the fire button, it assaults the guerilla, UFO and mutant mole.
   (3 – 5 guns can be set by adjusting dip switches.)
7. **CENTRAL LASER GUN** ....
   It is destroyed when taken away to the guerilla's position. Extra 1,000 – 2,000 points (adjustable by dip switches) give you another central laser gun.
8. **MUTANT MOLE** .....
   It appears every time you score 500 points, attacking your laser guns.
9. **CREDIT**.....
   The number of credit games is counted.

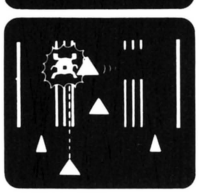
SCORE

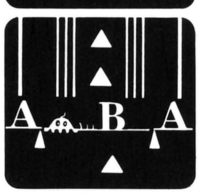
*The guerilla changes shape as the game continues .....

1 – 3 screens		Score 20 Points
4 – 6 screens		40 Points
7 – 9 screens		50 Points
10–12 screens Gold Guerilla		60 Points
After 13 screens		100 Points
UFO		50 – 300 Points
Mutant Mole		50 or 200 Points









TECHNIC I

1. If your laser gun is taken away by the guerilla, shoot him before he returns to his position.
   (The laser gun will stop there.)
2. Wait until the opposite (lefthand) guerilla appears to take the laser gun.
   (Be careful of the action of the righthand guerilla!)
3. Shoot the lefthand guerilla while he takes the laser gun to his position.
   (Return the laser gun to its location!)

TECHNIC II

The mutant mole, when it is within the area (B) in the drawing at left, does not attack the laser guns.

TECHNIC III

Be careful of the "whirlwind" guerilla!

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From the Editor

After having attended the recent industry-related exhibitions and having inspected a vast amount of new equipment, I find myself faced with a truly disturbing question—"Whatever happened to good old American ingenuity?" The proliferating Japanese influence on new American games is awesomely evident. And it is sad to note that the copycat syndrome is still very much with us.

Where's all that good old American know-how? That imagination? Has the engineering talent of our industry been lured away by the glamor of the vastly expanding consumer electronic game market? Or has that talent eroded to a point where it is now easier to simply manufacture a game under license or copy an existing piece through reverse engineering?

Operators pay a high price for new games these days. It is also true that games today are earning more money than ever before. The microprocessor is generally given credit for the high prices as well as the high earnings. It is interesting to note that this industry is one of those rare instances where the introduction of microprocessors coincided with prices going up. In other industries such as the computer field and the consumer electronics games industry, microprocessors brought prices down.

Why didn't solid state technology reduce the cost of new games? Research and Development, manufacturers will tell you. According to them, vast amounts of money have been invested into the design and development of the various RAMs and PROMs and other complicated circuitry that go into the making of microprocessor-oriented games. Surely, a similar amount of R&D had to go into the manufacture of home video games, yet anybody can buy a new home video game out of the Sears catalog for under $40 (with twenty game options, no less). We all know what an operator pays for one game. The difference is truly startling. Granted coin-op games have to be built in smaller numbers and according to much higher standards. You have to include a strong attractive cabinet, a television monitor, and a credit system; and this all adds greatly to the cost of the coin-op unit. But one still has to conclude that the cost is even higher than that because it has to cover the Research and Development costs. It's a considerable amount of money, and the operators deserve something more in return than copycat engineering and licensing agreements.

The point I'm making is that a licensed game should sell for substantially less than a game that was privately engineered. If, in fact, research and development contributes greatly to the cost of a new game, then it stands to reason that a new game that does not require research and development costs should sell for considerably less.

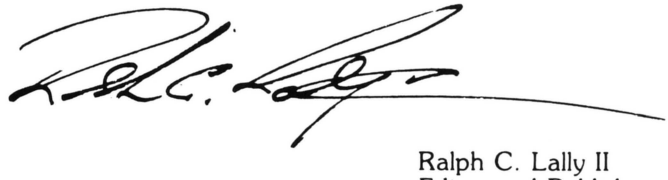
Don't get the impression I'm against licensed games. Had it not been for a licensing agreement between Taito and Midway, the United States would never have seen *Space Invaders*.

What I am against is wasted engineering talent. It is embarrassing to see the country that originated the video game now following the lead of another country. Are the American manufacturers afraid to take the first step?

Where is the inspiration and leadership going to come from? Who will emerge as the forerunner in the industry? What company will set the pace for the rest?

Will Japan win out in the long run or will it be good old American ingenuity?

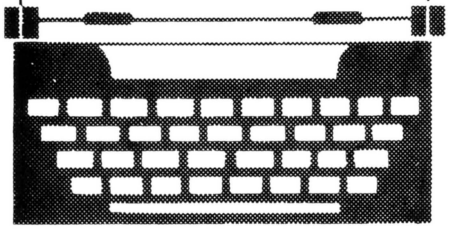
Who's to say? My only hope is that one day real soon we'll begin to see lower prices and more imaginative games. There are no cheap imitations in this industry—only expensive ones. So let's keep the imitations to a minimum and let's make innovation our primary concern.



Ralph C. Lally II
Editor and Publisher

'A licensed game should sell for substantially less than a game that was privately engineered. . . It stands to reason that a new game that does not require research and development costs should sell for considerably less.'

Mailbox . . . .



Serial numbers

We have had a problem of new machines being stolen in the Indianapolis, Indiana area (six machines in one weekend, November 10th and 11th). Three were ours and the other three belonged to another company. Our machines were two *Space Invaders* #28002 and #30107 and one *Head-On* #11429. The other company lost one upright *Space Invaders*, one cocktail table *Space Invaders* and one *Playboy* pinball.

If you could publish these serial numbers in your magazine or the PLAY METER Update we would appreciate it very much. Also, you might warn other operators to be aware of what is happening and advise what kinds of insurance they should carry, who it is available through and what security measures they should take.

E. Michael Glenn
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Finest

Your magazine is the finest in the industry.

I feel that it serves the best interest of all operators and technicians and I'm glad to have placed an ad in PLAY METER.

Jack Guarnieri
Brooklyn, NY

Old timers

How about an article on some of the older operators? My own father recently turned eighty years old and is still operating.

Also, I'd like to see a history of jukeboxes, and their predecessors, the player pianos.

Pat Gore
Earl P. Gore and Son
New Orleans, LA

[*Ed.—Your request, strangely enough, came at a time when we at PLAY METER were thinking about doing just what you've suggested—devoting an entire issue to the "old timers," the backbone of the coin-operated industry.*

We'd like to take this opportunity to request that our readers send in the names of older operators, whom we might contact for interviews. We're sure that they've lived through experiences too interesting to be lost just because no one yet has taken the time to record them.]

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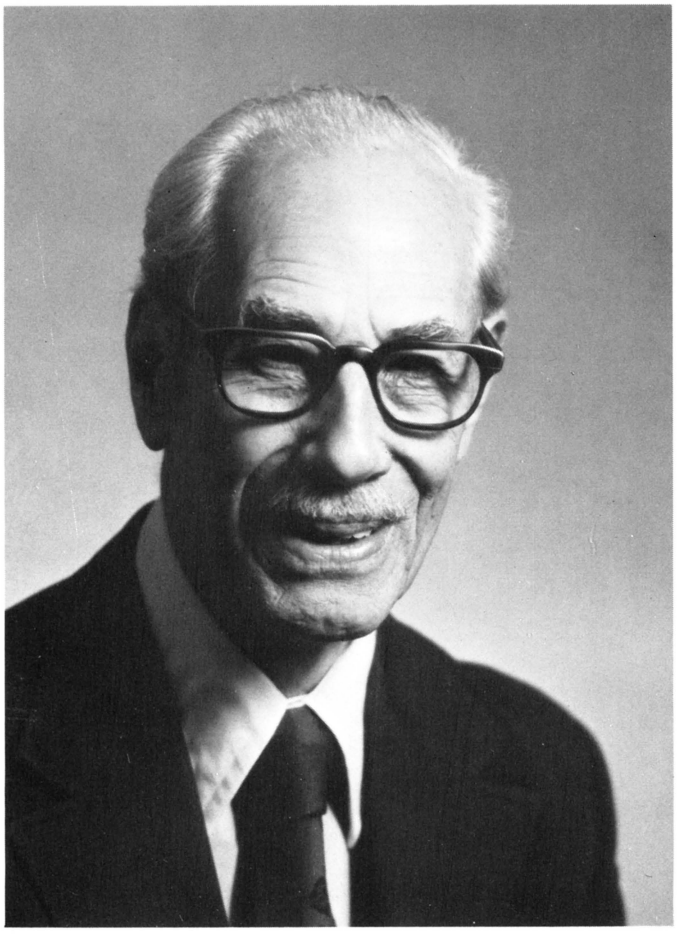
Coinman of the Month

HOWARD W. DOLPH



Howard W. Dolph of Tulsa, Oklahoma is one of a vanishing breed. He operates only jukeboxes—but maybe that statement should be qualified somewhat since his son, Dorian, recently persuaded him to spring for a few sitdown pinballs, which Dorian has agreed to maintain. But the fact remains that in a time when games are competing successfully for larger and larger shares of the operator's dollar, Dolph stands as somewhat of an enigma—still prospering after 52 years in a field which many operators are beginning to shun.

Howard's jukebox operation (which consists of roughly ninety pieces) stretches sixty miles in all directions from Tulsa—that's quite a geographical spread considering that H.W. Dolph Distributing Company consists only of himself (72 years of age), Dorian, and a secretary who has been with him for 33 years, Mrs. Hershel McLawson. Even though her functions are primarily office related, she too has made collections when the need has arisen. And she can also handle minor service problems such as stopped coin clots. Such is usually the nature of the personnel at the smaller operations throughout the country—but at H.W. Dolph Distributing, etc. it seems to typify the closeness and efficiency of his entire operation.

Born and raised in the backwoods of Michigan, Howard worked at many jobs before being enticed into the jukebox business by an advertisement in a local daily newspaper which said the National Piano Manufacturing Company was looking for mechanically inclined individuals who it could teach and send to any part of the United States.'

The company later changed its name to Automatic Musical Instrument Company (AMI).

The job consisted of opening up locations for the company's phonographs, making collections, and servicing those locations. Dolph said he felt the company's phonograph afforded him with an outstanding advantage—all the competition's phonographs still had horns, but AMI's was the only phonograph with a loudspeaker.

When the Depression got really bad, AMI began to trim away its phonograph operation and, in doing so, offered Dolph his choice of any route within his

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area—from Detroit to New Orleans, and from Columbus to Oklahoma City. It was a good deal. He could take his salary out of the collections and then send the rest on to the parent company as payment toward buying the route. In two years and ten months, he owned the whole route.

For a short while in the late '40s and early '50s, he was out of the operating end of the business; he sold his route and tried his hand instead at distributing, but he got out of it because he didn't like the idea of tracking down operators who owed him money.

So in 1954 he started another route—and he's still going at it.

Having grown up with jukeboxes, Howard claims many "firsts" in the industry. He claims to have invented the first popularity meter in 1930 (but it just wasn't practical at the time), and he also devised a clock in 1939 which was used to play a free record at random every thirty minutes.

When his competitive edge began to dwindle (because a competitor was offering a phonograph with twelve-record capacity, and AMI's had only a ten-record capacity), Dolph devised a method of taking two AMI jukeboxes and, with two relays and two mechanical switches, offered his locations twenty record capability. The speakers were crossed so that if either jukebox was played, the music came out of both of them. Despite the added cost of a second jukebox to the location, Dolph was able to increase his per-machine earnings and won a national award from AMI that year for his accomplishment.

His family consists of his wife, Harriett, a registered nurse; his son, Dorian, who works with him; and another son, Norman, who lives in New York City.

The Automatic Hostess System which Dolph operated during the 1940s.

PLAY METER: We hear a lot of talk today about the declining state of the jukebox business. As someone who has made his living almost exclusively off jukeboxes for over fifty years, how would you assess your jukebox business today?

DOLPH: We think our operation is as near the height of efficiency as it is possible to get. For that reason our business is as strong as it's ever been. You see, a big part of this profit thing is money saved. If you can save much of your income by not doing the wrong things, then you can make it in the jukebox business today.

I'll give you an example. There were some $17.50 solenoids that kept wearing out. Of course, the natural thing for an operator to do is go back and buy a whole new solenoid for $17.50 when the old one wears out. But we did some investigating and found out that nothing was wearing out except the brass slides. So what I did was spend about ten dollars on long distance telephone calls until I finally found out who made those solenoids. And when I found that out, I was able to get fifty slides for fifty dollars. So now when one of those $17.50 solenoids wears out, I don't have to buy the whole piece, I can just take the solenoid out, replace the slides, and the solenoid is as good as new. It's money saved. That's how I'm making a profit where some others in the phonograph business are having trouble making ends meet. I'm saving on things like that where they have to buy the whole unit, and I'm just buying the part.

We find out where to get the parts, and we save money that way. We also save money because we don't have any employees. We save money on records. We own our own building; so we save money on rent. In other words, we get to keep a large part of what we take in.

PLAY METER: So, because of your own industry, you have been able to succeed in the phonograph business. But is it your feeling that the customers are just as willing to play the jukebox today as they were in past years?

DOLPH: Well, we have different types of locations today. When I started in this business, there weren't even any taverns. So we put our

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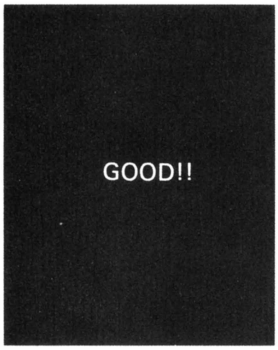

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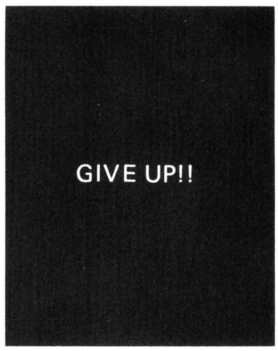
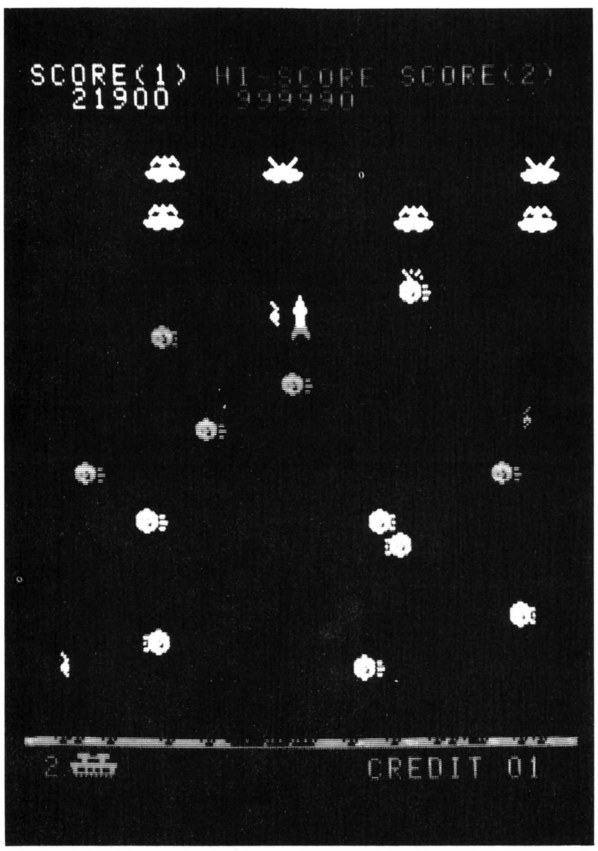


? SCREENS CLEARED



HOW TO PLAY "GALAXY WARS"

❶ SCORE DISPLAY: 6-digit display; 0 → 999950. However high your score may be, it is certainly displayed.

❷ UFO: A mysterious fleet of armed UFO's appears suddenly from a different dimension. They assault you by bombing.

❸ MISSILE: The only arm for the solar system defence forces.

- Depress the fire button and a missile will be launched; the missile speed will increase when depressing the fire button continuously.
- Control the missile sideways by handling the lever so as to assault the UFO's while dodging meteorites and bombs.

❹ METEORITES: Meteorites drifting in the battle space. At the start of the game there are 5 meteorites. They increase one by one as each pattern is erased. A maximum of 32 meteorites appear.

❺ SCORE: 50 — 550 points for UFO. There is a bonus chance of 600 points for one pattern.

❻ LAUNCHING PADS: 3 launching pads are available (alterable to 2 — 5 pads by controlling dip switches.)

❼ EXTRA: A launcher appears per 3,000 additional points (alterable to 5,000 points by controlling dip switches.)

❽ MESSAGE: While playing the game, messages appear on the screen. "GOOD!!" "VERY GOOD!!" "WONDERFUL!!" "FANTASTIC!!" "GIVE UP!!"

❾ CREDIT: The number of credit games is displayed. Games are countable up to 99 games.

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phonographs in restaurants, drug stores, and pool halls. Then, in the early thirties when beer came in, taverns became the main type of location. Now along come these fast food places, and they're eliminating all the old-time restaurants. The only good thing with these fast food stops is the pizza parlors and taco places; the people who patronize those establishments are ideal jukebox customers. The rest of those locations are no good for jukeboxes.

Now, our other source of revenue is taverns which use country and western music. But I should point out that we have adopted a policy whereby every last one of our taverns is on a flat rental arrangement. That's right, we don't operate jukeboxes in taverns on a percentage anymore. Under our agreement, we'll supply the taverns with the records, furnish them with the service, and let them keep the keys to the money boxes. A flat rental fee is my way of doing business with taverns.

The way we see it is that a jukebox in a tavern is essential to its business; so the tavern is willing to pay money in the form of rental, even if that rental money turns out to be more than fifty percent of the total collections because then the location owner can play that free music. If they've got a crowd, and the crowd doesn't play the jukebox, they'll play it themselves because it's good for their businesses. And they're willing to pay for it. But, as I said, that's just with our taverns. All our eating places are on percentages.

PLAY METER: Until very recently your operation consisted exclusively of jukeboxes, but within the past year you have gotten involved in operating games. Why was this?
DOLPH: Well, first of all, we did not get into it because our jukebox business had fallen off. The reason we got into it was that my son wanted to do something on his own. He's the one who has to make all those service calls; so when he suggested we get into the games end of this business, I agreed as long as he'd handle the service calls. But I can't say at this point whether the games are as profitable to me as the music business because we're still new into this.

I'll say this, though, over the long pull I'll stick with the jukeboxes. Pinballs, I think, eat up too much of their profit. But jukeboxes, by contrast, don't give us many problems. We operate ninety jukeboxes, and—aside from stopped up coin slots, broken glass, burglaries, and things like that over which we have no control—we have just one trouble call per week. And we've got some twelve year old phonographs out there. So you can see why I don't have the same regard for pinballs. We've had as many as three calls in the same day on some of our pinballs, but we can go a whole week without a single call on ninety jukeboxes. That's where the efficiency is. I should qualify all my remarks by adding that right now all our pinballs are sitdowns, though we'll soon be getting some uprights. From what I understand we'll have fewer problems with the uprights.

PLAY METER: You mentioned that you have some old phonographs on location. How long do you hold onto your equipment?
DOLPH: We hold our phonographs as long as we can. We never trade in a piece as long as it's profitable for a distributor to sell it profitably to a competitor. Instead, we'll sell it ourselves to someone to use in his home.

Frankly, I don't think the public knows the difference between a brand new machine and one that's three or four years old. They all give the same number of plays. They're all stereo. There's no difference except in appearances, and a machine that's two or three years still looks like new if you polish it up and put the right lights on it.

Until last year we hardly ever bought a new machine. We always bought trade-in models that were one or two years old. The reason for that was that we found they were usually traded in because there was something the matter with them that they couldn't fix. So we'd buy them as is, with no guarantees except that all the parts were there. And then we'd take the time to find out what was the matter with the machines and fix them. This is why I think it's very important that an operator get one brand of equipment—when it comes to phonographs—and stick with it. It's hard enough to learn all about one brand, but if you do that, there are advantages—as we have found out.

But last year we had to buy ten new machines because our sources of supply had run out. And this year we bought six or seven used machines; but, again, they were very late models.

PLAY METER: What are some things to consider when purchasing new equipment?
DOLPH: First of all, you have to know a bargain when you see one and learn to buy it then, whether you need it or not. Then, you should try to get on a cash basis with your suppliers. We find that helps. Also, we use long distance to get familiar with more than one distributor. We've also found that if a location can't produce enough revenue to pay for the equipment in forty weeks, then that location is over set. So before setting a location, the operator should estimate its potential and set it accordingly.

PLAY METER: How do you determine which records are worth your money?

DOLPH: There is no absolute rule that can be applied to every purchase. But I've found some good rules to follow. For instance, if records are costing you more than seven percent of your gross collections, then you're wasting your money. Also, it seems that if the man who puts the records on the machine is the same man who buys them, then you have the most efficient system possible.

As for some of the guidelines we follow, if it's by MCA Records and it's thin, we don't bother about buying it because it'll just give us service problems. Also, with record companies like Columbia and Epic, we go a whole lot by the serial numbers of the records. We've found that if the sides are not numbered in consecutive order neither side will be any good. So we won't bother about buying it. It just means the record company wanted to release some records and didn't have anything so they just reached back and pulled out a couple of clunkers.

Another thing to remember is that when a recording artist turns out two stinkers in a row, you should pass him up on everything after that. It seems that every good recording artist has from one to five good records in his kit. They'll usually shoot their best one first, and then after they've made two or three hits, watch out because they're going to start on the stinkers, and they'll try to sell them on their accumulated reputation. Right now, the only exception to this rule that I can find is the Eagles. They don't release too often, and mostly they are good records.

As far as country and western records, maybe it's just a coincidence, but it seems all the big name artists come out with a new record the same week. So in those cases, I buy everything while I can still get it. But I hardly every buy more of a record than what will stock seventy-five percent of my locations because, no matter how good a record is, there will always be certain locations that just won't play it. Within the past year, I can think of only two records that were good enough to buy for every location, regardless of type; and those were "The Gambler" and "The Devil Went Down To Georgia." It would seem that the record industry could turn out more than two such records in a year.

But as I said, if it's a hit, we'll buy enough of a

Mr. Dolph, who goes back many years in this industry, employed the American Hostess system. It took two pairs of telephone wires from a central location to each tavern and provided Dolph with 2100 selections for locations connected to the network.

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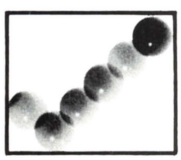

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record to stock seventy-five percent of our locations. When we first get the record we'll take the record off at those locations that aren't playing it and give it to the other twenty-five percent of our locations as a "B" record. Then, two or three months later, after the record has run its course at some of those locations, these same locations that weren't playing it before will start requesting it, and so you'll be able to fill the orders without buying more records.

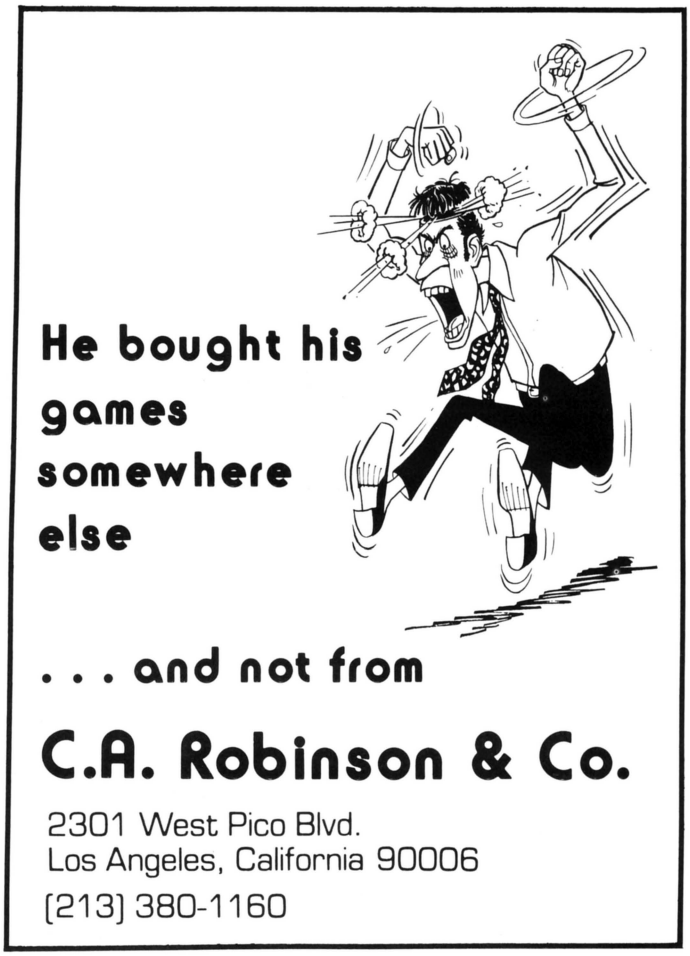
PLAY METER: How often do you change your records?
DOLPH: We collect and change records on a two-week basis. We give each location at least five records that it has not had before. Our records are labelled "A" week and "B" week. Of the five records we'll put on that jukebox, at least three of those records will be "A" records—that is, records we bought this week and have not used before. And the other two records will be "B" records. Then the next time we come around, if any one of those three records is not in the top five according to the pop meter, off it comes, and this record becomes one of the two "B" records at another location. If it turns out that all three "A" records make the top five—which is seldom—then we use more records the next week. So each collection period a location can count on at least five record changes—three records that are brand new and two that have been placed on other machines at other locations.

PLAY METER: How do you keep up with current music?
DOLPH: My car radio is tuned into a western station. I keep a pocket-sized tape recorder on my car seat, and if I hear anything I like, I recite the name of the record into the recorder. By the end of the week, I'll have maybe three or four names to check up on.

Likewise, my son has his car radio tuned to a rock station for the same reason. We both agree that if the radio doesn't play a new tune, then it won't have much of a chance on a jukebox. But then, there are exceptions to the rule because last year one of our biggest records as "King Tut," and to my knowledge, it was never played on our local rock and roll station, nor did it make the charts. I think what happened in this instance was that some kid asked for it, and I saw it on a sheet; so I bought some on a hunch. Then when we went out with it, and stayed out on the top five. It surprised us enough that we kept buying more of the record until it had made the rounds at all our locations. I guess that would seem to indicate a jukebox can promote a record.

PLAY METER: What do you do about requests from a location?
DOLPH: We do handle requests. If the request is for something we were going to get the location anyhow, we'll get it. But if the request is for some old tune by some little known artist, we don't pay it much attention.

We've found that if you get three requests on the same street in the same week for the same record,



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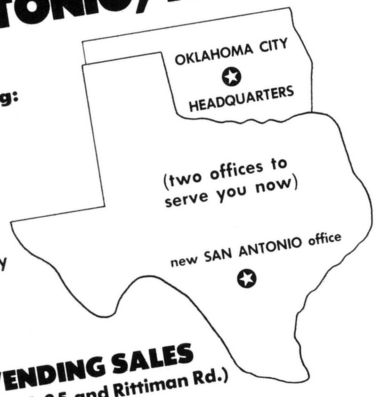

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you shouldn't be fooled into thinking you've missed a hot one because you can bet it's the same guy putting in the same request wherever he goes. Also, we don't break our necks digging out old rock and roll records to fill requests from employees at fast food places because the employees will probably be gone before we get back with their records. And even if they're still there, they'll usually play it four or five times, and no one else will play it at all.

PLAY METER: So do you bother about keeping a record library?
DOLPH: We keep a large library of country and western records, and we rely on this quite often to fill requests. Plus that, we've got a good stack of old standards, but we seldom use them because the present generation doesn't play them, and the older generation doesn't play much of anything.

With popular music, we don't attempt to keep a library. The popular music records that will make the library will be outstanding records, like those by the Righteous Brothers. But, really, with our popular music, we don't use it but one-tenth of the time.

PLAY METER: If you decide to spring for a new song, how many records will you buy?
DOLPH: I'll usually buy about 30 or 35 records of each of three new songs. And then after I put those records out on location, it'll be two weeks before I check how they did, and then we're checking to see if it made the top five. If it didn't, off it comes—and on it goes to someone else's phonograph as a "B" record. But if it makes the top five, we'll probably go out and buy thirty more of the same record. I would say that only about one record in five makes it all the way around to all the locations.

The reason we'll buy only three new records per week is that the radio station is only going to be putting on maybe five or six new records on its chart, but the next week it will take off maybe two or three of those, and you'll never hear of them again. So you have to use your judgement as to which records have a chance.

PLAY METER: Do you have any observations about the phonograph or record business you would like to pass on?
DOLPH: Well, in the course of a year I talk with about five or six country musicians, and I tell them all the same thing. If you want a hit record, you've got to take a lesson from the Salvation Army. They'll set up on a street corner and as soon as they start to play the Salvation Army beat, the people start coming from all around.

I tell them that if they can make a record with that same beat, they just can't miss. Twenty-five years ago, someone made a record called "Cigarettes, Whiskey, and Wild, Wild Women," and it was a big hit. And years later, a woman singer made one called "There's a Big Wheel Rolling," and it used that same beat. And both of those records were big hits on the jukeboxes. So if you hear a record that's got the Salvation Army beat, you can bet it'll be a hit.

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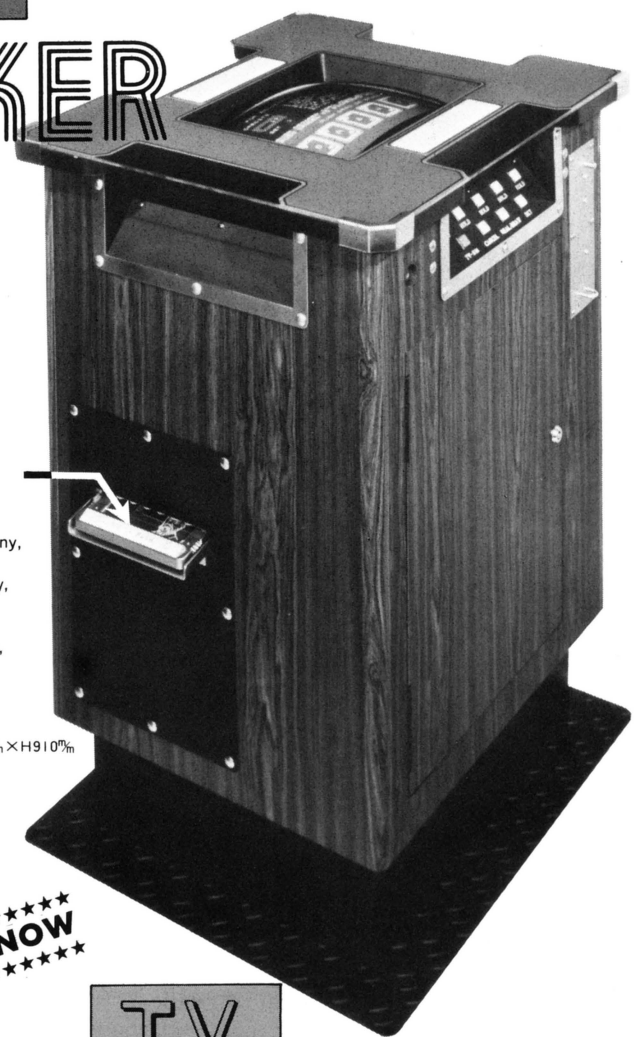

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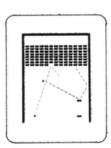
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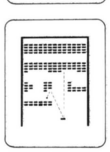
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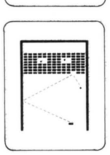

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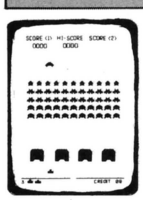

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Record Crowds at 1979 AMOA

The AMOA show was, as usual, a burst of color, crowds, and excitement. The only difference this year was that attendance figures placed the show firmly into the realm of "convention" rather than show.

A whopping 7,130 people attended the event, versus 6,407 last year. The number of exhibitors this year totalled 131, utilizing 318 booths (of which some were oversized). Exhibitors last year totalled 126 while booths tallied up to 308.

Foreign interest ran high again in 1979, with representatives hailing from 33 countries, although that figure was down from the record 36 of last year.

Gaming equipment again was allowed on the convention floor, again receiving mixed reactions from convention-goers and exhibitors alike.

Wayne Hesch, outgoing president of the AMOA, noted at the bruncheon and general membership meeting on Saturday, that the organization had been very active the past year. "A partial list would have to include the addition of two educational seminars; we began a conference of state associations; acquired a new, highly qualified executive vice president, Leo Droste; the decision was reached to move to Las Vegas in '82; the Sunday awards program will appear on national television broadcast by NBC; and there was great activity by the AMOA on the copyright issue in Washington."

The jukebox copyright law, not surprisingly, was still a burning issue. "Fighting unfair regulations is a must. That's the main reason we started a legal action fund," Hesch said. "We now have $90,000 toward our goal of $250,000."

The appointment of Droste to replace Vic Rye as assistant executive vice president came after exhaustive interviewing, Fred Grander reported in a telephone interview with PLAY METER. "I personally feel that we're very fortunate in the fact that he's very qualified for the job," he said. "He has considerable experience in trade association management as chief staff officer of the Shoe Service Institute of America headquartered in Chicago."

"He holds a bachelors degree and masters degree from Northern Illinois University and he is a Certified Association Executive. From 1974 to the present, he has been executive vice president of the Shoe Service Institute of America. Prior to that, he was assistant executive vice president of the National Building Materials Association," the AMOA executive vice president noted.

"He also has been a staff member of the business research division of the University of Colorado's school of business. He's 47 years old and lives with his wife and three children in LaGrange, Illinois," Granger said.

The general membership meeting always signals the changing of the guard on the AMOA board of directors. and this year was no exception. Moving up to the chief executive officer slot for 1980 will be new president Bob Nims; first vice president, James I. Mullins; secretary, Leoma Ballard; and treasurer, Clayton Norberg.

New vice presidents will be L. Marsh, E.L. Schultz, and Richard Silla, all of whose terms expire in 1982. Filling the unexpired term of Clayton Norberg will be James R. Watkins.

New directors include Clyde F. Knupp, Melvin Pearlman, Raymond R. Schroth, John P. Stocksdale, Allan Bershad, Curtis H. Hudson, Jack Kerner, Robert N. Kline, W.M. Stone, and Kem Thom.

Wayne Hesch will take over the chairmanship of the Past Presidents Council and Russell Mawdsley, unfortunately, will be leaving the council due to an expired term. Other Past Presidents Council members include Don Van Brackel, Garland B. Garrett, Sr., Ted Nichols,

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Top Arrows Gate Feature Allows Extended Play
When the ball goes thru the lit yellow arrow, 3000 points are awarded and a left bottom gate opens and returns the ball to the flipper. When the ball goes thru the 2 lit green arrows, 5000 points are awarded.

Saucer and Rollover Button Feature Help Take You To New Pinball Highs
Scores increase on both the saucer and the rollover button each time the ball comes in contact with either feature. The saucer value climbs to a possible high of 9000 points and the rollover button to a possible 10,000 points! Both features revert back to the 1st time point value when the ball passes thru the outhole.

Favorite Futurity In-Line Drop Targets
4 Futurity In-Line drop targets light the spinners 2x, 4x and 6x multipliers; and spot the F-U-T-U-R-E S-P-A letters in addition scoring 400 points each The drop targets open th way to the futurity target which increases in value from extra ball, to 20,000 points to special.

Left Kicker Feature Exercises Point Value
The left kicker spots F-U-T-U-R-E S-P-A letters, if lit, and scores 3000 points upon the 1st entry 5000 points on 2nd, and 7000 points on the 3rd entry. The 4th and each additional time the ball enters, 9000 points are scored, and lit F-U-T-U-R-S-P-A letter is spotted. The feature kicks the ball back onto the playfield after each entry.

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PRINTED IN U.S.A.

and Fred Collins, Jr.

As for the games at the show, it seems the arcade game of the year has yet to appear—perhaps it will surface at PLAY METER's Amusement Operators Expo this spring.

The reason for a non-selection of any solid candidates for game of the year honors appears to be that apparently manufacturers were mesmerized by last year's video game hits, *Space Invaders* and *Head On*, and decided to expend quite a bit of energy making rehashes of them instead.

Nevertheless, there were a few games at this year's expo that showed promise...and even a little bit of imagination.

Atari's *Asteroids* was probably the most promising of the lot. The game has in its favor the fact that it is quick to learn and easy to play; and that, as it turned out, was a major characteristic in many games this year. Simple to understand and easy to play—it probably goes back again to the enormous influence of *Space Invaders*.

Using control buttons, players try to destroy large asteroids by firing missiles at approaching rocks. The first few hits only splinter the rocks, but dogged persistence will destroy the rocks completely. The game has some of the appeal of, you guessed it, *Space Invaders*, in that it uses the same hypnotic beat and, additionally, play can go on indefinitely—as long as you can dodge the oncoming rocks.

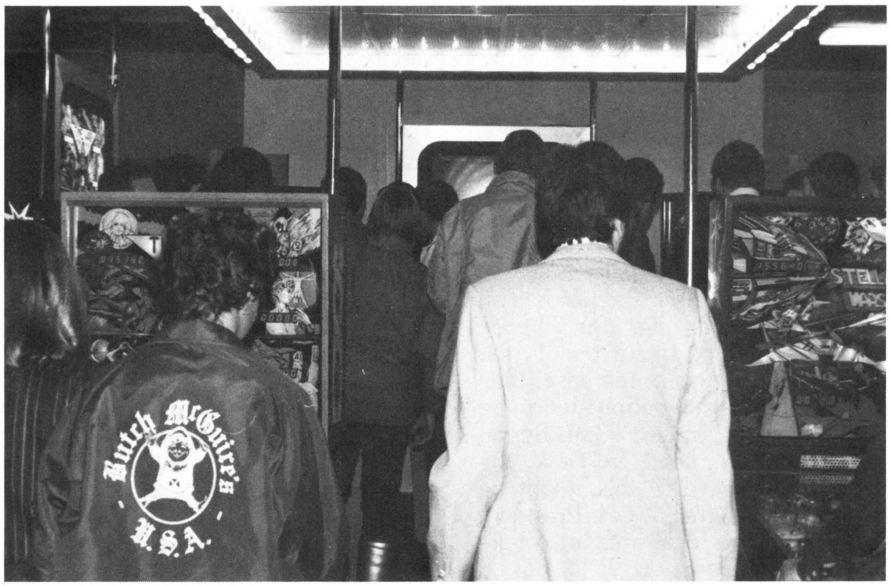
Like many other games this year, *Asteroids* has a top ten listing and initialing feature as an added incentive for players.

The other video game that garnered a lot of first place votes at this year's show was *Tailgunner* by the people who brought you the 1977 game of the year, *Space Wars*. Cinematronics' *Tailgunner* is a tempting game which is also simple to play and understand. Using a small joystick, players try to shoot down oncoming rockets as they approach in groups of three.

Like *Asteroids*, this single-player game can go on indefinitely until a predetermined number of rockets have eluded the players. The game also includes a "Shield" feature which bounces escaping ships back onto the screen for a second chance at stopping them.

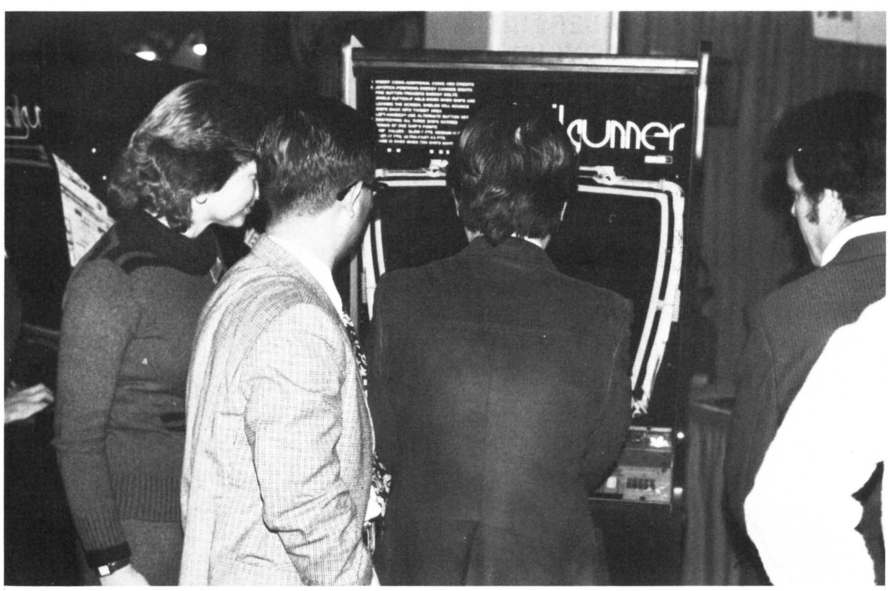
The Cinematronics game, interestingly, has an alternative set of controls for the world's most discriminated against minority—left handers.

As far as the *Space Invaders* spinoffs, it was the Japanese companies which showed the best



Gorgar, *the industry's first talking pin, drew large crowds at the Williams booth.*

The Wildcat Chemical booth was crowded with convention-goers trying to open a treasure chest.



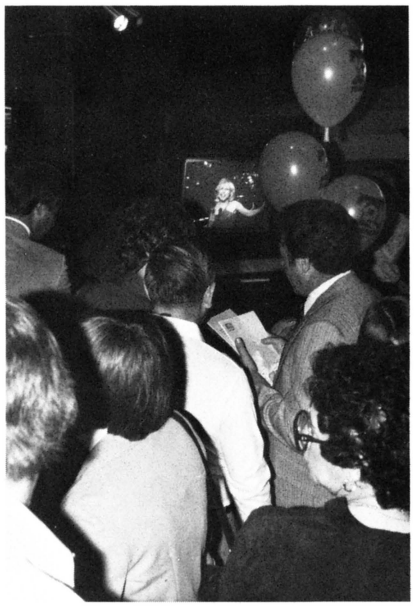
Cinematronics' Tailgunner *attracted large numbers of video game players.*

adaptations. The targets in Namco's *Galaxian*, which will be handled in the United States by Midway under license from Namco, proved to be harder to hit than the targets in the original. The *Galaxian* rockets from a *Space Invaders* formation, peel off in solo attacks or in larger groups to do battle with the player's lone rocket, but never allow the player the luxury of a motionless target.

Universal's *Cosmic Guerilla* has an interesting switch to the *Space Invaders* theme. Instead of the invaders attacking a home base, they are trying to steal people who are lined up on the screen. Considering the situation in Iran, a "Save the Hostages" game like this might be just the thing that'll get President Carter to visit a local arcade to take out his aggressions.

A third *Space Invaders*-type game is Sega/Gremlin's *Astro Fighter* which features variations on the theme of aliens. But, like *Galaxians*, hitting the little monsters is somewhat harder than in the original *Space Invaders*.

From Exidy, by way of Nintendo, comes *Bandito* which features a sheriff surrounded by banditos who are gunning for him. Fortunately the bullets are slow-moving, and the sheriff has a chance to dodge them and shoot the dastardly enemies instead.



A video jukebox attracted some of the largest crowds at this year's show.

Monaco GP by Sega/Gremlin was the most innovative driving game at the show—and probably the most expensive one too. Using an enclosed sitdown cabinet and a stereo system, Gremlin has put together a fine racing game which includes passing firetrucks, tunnels, ice, and quite an assortment of sounds.

Midway also introduced a driving game, *Super Speed Race*, which is much like *Monaco GP* but without the firetruck and stereo sound and enclosed cabinet.

Taito, meanwhile, was exhibiting a driving game for two players, called *Super Road Champions*. With the two-steering wheel setup, the game offers some interesting competitive possibilities between the players since they can try and force their opponent off the road or into other cars.

Then there was a sleeper at the show, no less, coming from the Allied Leisure booth. The game, *Space Bug*, features two space bugs which acting sort of like forklifts try to push boxes with point values into one of two storage bins. As a two-player game, *Space Bug* is a good competitive game that's easy to learn and play. As a one player game, the computer takes the place of the other space bug.

Some of the other videos which showed promise at the show included Namco's *Zero In*, a projection screen arcade piece; *Submarine*, a war at sea video game from Exidy; and two *Space Invaders* spinoffs from Midway entitled appropriately enough *Space Invaders 2* and *Space Invaders Deluxe*.

With the exception of Sega-

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Gremlin which displayed two innovations—the dual game module and the mini-video game—the innovations in the arcade and video equipment this time around were few and far between...and came mostly from newcomers to this industry.

The biggest crowds gathered around a video display jukebox to see, as well as hear, performances from the top performers in today's music scene. The video jukebox, *Showtime*, is not in actual production yet—negotiations still have not been completed on the use of much of the material. But if the plan materializes, it could offer operators another way to shoot some life into their music locations.

Problems inherent with the system, however, are many—the copyright ramifications, of course, which *Showtime*'s innovators say they are handling themselves; the reduced number of selections available to the operator; and video music discs which would be distributed on a leasing arrangement only. Still, the system seems to present some new possibilities for the quiet earner, the jukebox.

Pinball was not without its innovations, of course. Williams showed off the industry's first talking pinball machine, *Gorgar*; and Bally, solely for the purposes of the show, laid its hand upon *Kiss* and made it speak.

Gaming equipment was on display again this year.

Stern introduced a rather interesting twist to the high score to date feature—a camera mounted on top of the backglass takes a picture of whoever sets a new high score on the game. It would seem, though, that this might have some legal problems in some areas where governmental and law enforcement bodies would construe the photograph as "something of value" and say that it, like free games or extra balls are illegal in those areas. By the way, Stern premiered its first wide body game, *Big Game*, at the show. And Universal introduced a video screen pinball readout.

Another pinball innovation came from a new company, Viza Manufacturing, which introduced *War*, a two-player cocktail pingame which has some interesting technical characteristics (see Zac Oliver's analysis in this issue), as well as some novel play characteristics where the object of the game is to drain the ball—in your opponent's outhole.

And there was the *Metaphaser* from Meta International, Inc. which is a two player non-game which blends (actually, the word is *interchanges*) the facial feature of the two customers.

Color monitors seemed to be everywhere this year; and, while it may or may not add to the play appeal of the game itself, it does appear that most video games will most certainly be in color from here on.

Editor's Note: For complete coverage of all the seminars, see next month's issue of PLAY METER.

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By Debbie Grant

From left, Henry Holzenthal, Joseph Caruso, and "Happy" Giarrusso maintain a colorful and efficient record library at TAC Amusement in New Orleans.

A look at a big music operation that's better

In many bars, the tone and atmosphere of the whole place seem to be determined by what's playing on the jukebox.

If the songs flow uninterruptedly throughout the night and the crowd seems happy, chances are the right songs have been chosen for the box. And that happy coincidence is probably not the result of the good musical taste of the bartender.

Rather, if the songs on the jukebox are a hit with the patrons, more than likely it's because those particular tunes were decided on after an informed professional studied the situation and came up with the right tunes for the location.

There are two factors behind every successful jukebox—a well-stocked record library and in informed programmer who knows what he is doing.

In the case of TAC Amusement of New Orleans, which has approximately 1,500 jukeboxes, a workable record library is essential. TAC's library is stocked with well over one million discs, and the record programmers depend heavily on that library to keep the jukeboxes operating profitably.

It is these record programmers who stock the record library. They listen to the records before buying those they think will be "hot," choose records for certain locations, and then route them out to specific jukeboxes.

At TAC, programmers Joseph Caruso, H.J. "Happy" Giarrusso, and Henry Holzenthal—who have eighty years of experience between them—are responsible for about 400 jukeboxes. Since each box is supplied with 80 records, the programmers have to select more than 30,000 records to fill their boxes alone. Of course, that total could be more or less, depending on the number of requests filed with each jukebox.

To enable the record library to keep up with and, hopefully, ahead of customer requests, they have to know which records are going to be popular. And that entails listening to thousands of discs every year.

Of course, the programmers watch the record charts and trade magazines, talk to deejays and the routemen who actually go out to the bars to service the jukeboxes, but in the end it all comes down to listening on their own and deciding which discs to gamble on.

At TAC, there is a turntable and an overhead speaker in the record library that is in use much of the day as the programmers look for new records. "I may play 25 records in ten minutes," says Caruso. "A lot of new releases come out every day."

"You have to listen to a lot," admists Giarrusso, "because you sometimes can get only two out of fifty."

Because of time restrictions, the

men often listen only to the beginning and the beat of a record. "We know what we are looking for and if it's not there we can tell," says Caruso. "You can spot a good one right away. Sometimes others sneak up on you," he continues. "We can listen two or three times and decide to order 500, even if we didn't like the first one."

One problem facing the programmers is that occasionally a hot record will appear, but it will only be available on an album, which affectively eliminates the song for jukebox use (only 45s may be used). "Record companies won't release a single until they get all the juice off the album," says Caruso. "By the time we get it, people could be tired of it."

Even though the programmers rely on radio stations for ideas of what is going to be hot, often they will take the lead, purchasing it on their own instincts. "A lot of times we go out on a record faster than the radio stations," says Holzenthal. "They have to be more cautious than us."

If a pop record sounds good to the programmers, they will start out by buying 100 discs, says Giarrusso. Within a few months they may increase their order to 300 records. "You have to be very careful with pop," he reports. "If you buy 300-500 at a time you could get burned. You can never tell with pop."

Soul music is another matter entirely, he says. "With soul you can tell right away because customers will call for it."

Adding to the difficulty in choosing good numbers is the amount of the product on the market. "In the old days artists used to turn three (records) a year. Now they do six or seven," says Caruso.

Thirty years ago, when Caruso and Giarrusso began working with TAC, there were only four major record companies—Decca, RCA, MGM, and Columbia. Those four labels would have a few new releases every year, but now the number of major record company labels is in the hundreds.

Just because the programmers deem a certain record to be a good one doesn't necessarily mean it will sell, alleges Caruso. "Sometimes the bad number will sell," he says. "People will like the artist or the material. For instance, Steve Lawrence doesn't sell anymore, but maybe you'll get requests for him and he will sell well."

No matter how careful the men are in selecting records, whether the choices are good or bad, the most important thing is to match the right records to the right location.

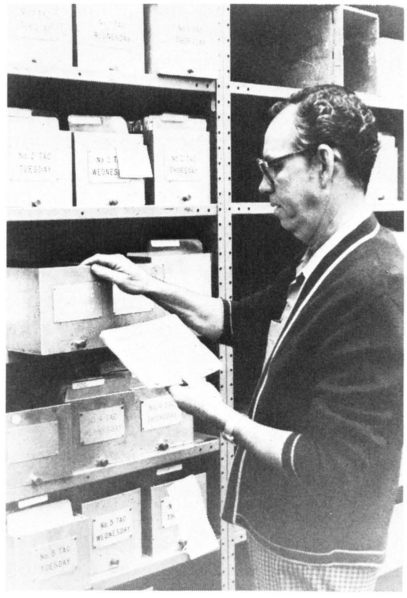
And knowing the location is the key to setting up a successful jukebox. The three TAC programmers pride themselves on how well they know their areas.

"It's all in our heads," says Holzenthal. "We know our sections like the back of our hands—or we like to think we do."

Caruso and Giarrusso, both TAC employees with more than thirty years experience under their belts, used to run the routes themselves. That meant they would spend one day a week in the record library listening to and purchasing records, then deciding which ones would go where. The rest of the week would be devoted to traveling to the bars and changing the records as each location required.

After the company acquired more boxes, the two began staying in the library fulltime to devote more time to programming and buying records. Interestingly enough, some of the boxes they program are on the routes they originally ran themselves.

When a new box is added to their lists, the programmers may be given specific tunes the owners want included on the box, or they may be given a couple of broad categories, like country and western and top 40s. Then it is up to the programmers themselves to build the entire set-up, which is the group of eighty records used in the box.



Joe Caruso checks route boxes before they're picked up.

"We try to select the records by calls and requests that come in here," says Caruso. "No two locations take the same type of music. You have to know the crowd—is it young or adult? Do they like country music, jazz, disco, big band, or '50s?

"When you first go into a location you sometimes suggest alternatives," he says. "But if they want '40s, we give that to them. We send them what they think is hot."

Once the categories are established for the box, the programmers can go to work. "We choose some standards," notes Giarrusso. "Maybe there are only thirty real top records. Then we go back and select from the big people."

Some stars today have an across the board appeal that enables them to be placed on several types of boxes. For instance, Willie Nelson is so big today that he can be used in many different kinds of places, the men say.

Occasionally the type of box decided upon will backfire on the operator and a whole different crowd of people—not the type originally desired—will be attracted. Country and western music, for example, could bring in a motorcycle group instead of patrons normally associated with the country music type.

Once the boxes are set up, new records are added at the rate of about three per machine per week, in addition to the records requested by name by the owner.

The programmers have a folder system to keep track of exactly what record is in what location. For each box there is a plastic folder which contains an exact replica of the list that appears on the jukebox. The list will have the titles of the songs and the corresponding numbers that are used to select them for play on the jukeboxes.

Using a memory typewriter, a record library employee types up new lists each week for each box. When the routeman services the box, he changes the appropriate songs on the box itself to correspond to the new list.

The folders and new 45s are placed in rectangular metal boxes—separate boxes for each day—that the route men take with them when they go out into the field.

In addition to keeping up with the routine changing of records to keep up with customer demands, the programmers have to contend with seasonal requests. The holidays that bring with them most demands for certain songs at Christmas, St. Patrick's Day, and Easter.

Harry Holzenthal, above, is pictured at the record bins where new arrivals come in.

But requests differ according to location. In New Orleans, Mardi Gras brings more requests than Christmas. And while Easter used to be very big, "now they don't want to hear 'Easter Parade' like they used to," says Giarrusso.

In preparing the boxes for Christmas, the men will "cover the route," meaning that every machine will get five or six standards. "Please Come Home for Christmas," "Jingle Bell Rock," and "Rock Around the Christmas Tree."

If a bar caters exclusively to young people, there will not be much demand for Christmas music, reports Giarrusso, because young people do not care for Christmas records. Unless, that is, there happens to be sometimes above the lines of Elton John Christmas disc.

After a box is programmed, there is feedback on the success of the selections from the machine itself through a device known as a popularity meter. The routemen check the meter and bring back information on the hot songs and those that aren't doing anything. Sometimes the makeup of the crowd will change, and that will dictate a new type of music for the box.

With over one million records in the library, certain systems and methods for keeping track of everything have had to be devised.

The TAC library is a brightly lit, tall-ceilinged room with autographed pictures of artists and colorful posters of musical groups adorning the walls. And climbing close to the ceiling are metal shelves loaded with the boxes that contain the records. The boxes are color coded as to type of music they contain, with all similar colors grouped together alphabetically by the name of the artists.

At TAC, blue designates soul, yellow is pop, orange is country and western, pink is progressive jazz, and green is Dixieland jazz.

Each individual storage box can hold 25 45s. The selections they hold range from the most current hits to rare, irreplaceable old discs that go back many years. "We have some in there you can't buy today, like some of Fats Domino's records," says Giarrusso.

"We can fill almost any request they ask for," says Caruso. "If they go back to the '40s, they might be asking for things that are not available."

The smallest colored section in the TAC library is the green Dixieland jazz group. Dixieland is dying out as far as 45s go, and since no artist wants to cut them anymore, all the songs are recorded on albums. "It's a shame that in New Orleans, the birthplace of the jazz, you can't get Dixieland," laments Giarrusso.

While the programmers may have trouble keeping Dixieland in stock, two records they make sure they have plenty of are Frank Sinatra's "My Way" and "Mack the Knife" by Bobby Darin. Those, surprisingly enough, are the two most requested songs in the building.

Another important aspect of building a successful record library, in addition to placing the best songs in the location most likely to go for them, is making sure that all the records that leave the library come back into it.

"Getting records back into the library after they hit the street is one of the most important parts of building a good record library," says Caruso. "You have to stay on them and get it all back. Sometimes people want records for their own that you can't buy anymore, like Louis Prima 45s."

All the record programmers agree that theirs is a business "you have to keep on your toes and stay awake in order to be successful." And even at that, the men admit, sometimes, no matter how careful you are, you'll get burned. But with knowing the business as well as possible, those times can become few and far between.

The Definitive AMOA Primer

By Dick Welu

'I saw Space Invaders and Head On games in the snowflakes on my drive home; I saw them in the headlights of oncoming cars; I saw them in my dreams. Space Invaders, Head On. Space Invaders, Head On. Hey, manufacturers, they are good games-- but enough is enough!'

1. In the registration area of the Conrad Hilton the first foreign visitor tag that passed me had "Paraguay" printed on it. Paraguay! for crying out loud; Paraguay has a coin machine business? I shook my head in disbelief.

2. Besides the Paraguayan invasion, one had to beware of the Japanese. I have to wonder how many counties have done so well by losing a war? The Japanese influence was everywhere. They are coming up with the ideas, building the machines, and buying them too!

3. But don't let Paraguay and Japan fool you. Do you know where the new games are coming from? How about Lawton, Oklahoma. Or is it Comanche? Or Duncan? I'm not sure where, but the company is called Man's Destiny. Or is it Destiny's Dream? I'm not sure about that either, but the game is called *Zaron*. Or is it *The Ultimate Racing System?* Actually, all of the above are correct, according to the modest literature posted and distributed by the two cowboys manning Booth 89 in the Continental Room.

4. *Zaron, The Ultimate Racing System*, for those of you who missed it, is a table-top game featuring two grooved race tracks which propel by air light foam-plastic race cars. Patented by Herman Parker, and produced and distributed by a small Oklahoma company with Destiny somewhere in its name, the game grabbed my attention for one major reason—it was original, imaginative, and different—qualities in short supply at this year's AMOA show. Odds on it ever becoming a major success are high because of its humble beginnings, but my hat is off to you Oklahomans. You were a breath of fresh air in a dull, new game show. (P.S. Try the home market on a smaller scale. Having struggled to keep my son's slot car junk running, I think you may have a better way.)

5. Dull? Did I say, "Dull?" I mean, DULL, as in how dull can a show be where you look at fifteen different versions of *Space Invaders* and ten versions of *Head On*? We had *Space Invaders* in color, in circles, disguised as cowboys, in space ships, raiding home planets, coming out our ears. We had *Head On* in color, in circles, with tunnels and bridges, with odd patterns, with trains, coming out our ears. I saw *Space Invaders* and *Head On* games in the snowflakes on my drive home; I saw them in the headlights of oncoming cars; I saw them in my dreams. *Space Invaders, Head On. Space Invaders, Head On*. Hey, Manufacturers, they are good games—but enough is enough!

6. The best of the *Space Invaders* spin-offs appears to be another Japanese original (Namco), *Galaxians*, which it seems will appear in this country (again) through those busy little fellows over at Midway. The concept is the same as the original *S.I.*, but through the use of color and more animated targets, this game showed promise of being the solid follow-up as "Son of Space Invaders."

7. The show was way too crowded. If any further evidence was needed that it was time to kiss the Hilton goodbye, this year's congestion would have cinched it. I never did get to play some games because of the throngs. Las Vegas, we are ready for you. Are you ready for us?

9. A prime offender in the congestion area was the Williams display. Someone at Williams thought it was a good idea to put the company's top showpiece, the talking pinball, *Gorgar*, at the top of three steps inside a small, enclosed pavillion area and award T-shirts to the players who could make *Gorgar* speak. But few people could view the machine without enduring a lengthy wait in line. And I'm not that hard up for a T-shirt so I passed. Luckily, I got

'Shoemaker's law: For some of my customers, deposit 25 cents is too complicated.'

a chance earlier to see the game at my distributor's showroom; so I feel qualified to recommend *Gorgar* anyway.

9. *The Driver* was back. In the '78 show it was shown by Meadows. Meadows took the pipe during the year, however, and *The Driver* was brought out by U.S. Billiards instead. I picked it as the best game of the show last year. Heck, I'd do it again this year, but it used up its rookie eligibility by its previous debut. (Incidentally, let us bow our coin slots in a moment of silence for the passing from the game scene of not only Meadows, but also Americoin and Ramtek.)

10. What about the girls, Dick, you ask? The truth is, fans, they weren't all that great. Too much make-up and weird to ill-fitting costumes on most of the hostesses employed in the various booths. Could women's lib be taking its toll? Or are all the smashing gals of Chicago wintering in sunny climes? Ernie Holmes, the WBC heavyweight champ, was there to help Tournament Soccer promote its new line of pool tables, but big Ernie isn't exactly a cute number. Since Bally was presenting *Dolly*, its next pinball celebrity tie-in, I was eagerly looking forward to the Bally booth. Sad and disappointing was the reality that while Bobby Orr and Playboy Playmates could make the scene in the flesh, Dolly Parton would rather stay home and sing in the shower. Got to look at her game though, and while I'm not sure about the play appeal, on a scale of 1 to 40, I'd rate the backglass artwork at 42.

11. Lacking a lot of notable games, the '79 AMOA convention will be remembered as the year that color video monitors really made inroads into the game business. Color was everywhere, and though it certainly lends new character and appearance to a game, a bad game in color is no better than a bad game in black-and-white. Just more expensive.

12. When they weren't re-working old games, manufacturers were showing new games that were so complicated few of today's customers would have the patience to learn how to play them. It is important to remember that people play coin games for quick entertainment, not to take an I.Q. test. If they wanted a brain-buster, they'd stay home and play chess. A lengthy list of instructions on the front of a game is an immediate turn-off. Halfway through his first game, a customer should understand the concept and what is expected of him. Never forget Steve Shoemaker of Redondo Beach who said of directions: "For some of my customers, 'Deposit 25 cents' is too complicated."

13. I'm going to skip the gambling equipment. It's all illegal in my state; I don't believe it should be included in the AMOA game show; when you've seen one slot machine, you've seen them all. (But, notice: they're simple to play.)

14. Exidy's *Starfire* device of allowing the player to sign his initials behind his high score was seized on by many manufacturers. (I told you this show lacked originality.) One manufacturer (no names, please) featured a game that permitted the player to use up to ten letters. I asked a nearby company representative, "Do you know how many dirty words a kid can spell out with ten letters?" He just kind of smiled and shrugged his shoulders. That may be easy for him, but when some mother walks into my arcade with her young children and is greeted by a message on the video screen that refers to common sexual advice, I don't think grinning or shrugging is going to help me or this industry one bit.

15. My annual "Best of Show" award—which means absolutely nothing—goes this year to a jukebox. Really. The jukebox is called *Showtime*, and it is a "video disc" jukebox. To quote the product literature: "After you deposit your coin, you not only hear the song of your choice, but you also see the actual entertainer performing on a large 25-inch television screen." Sensational, you bet, and crowds lined up to watch this breakthrough in entertainment. Manufactured in Japan by The General Corporation and distributed by Show-Time Systems International Inc., this piece portends great potential. Not the least of its attraction at this AMOA was the fact that some of its video footage bordered on the X-rated side. I stood there a long time trying to prevent other people from watching such material—till my wife dragged me away.

16. Give Cinematronics/Vectorbeam credit. They didn't show a re-make of you-know-what-most-popular-games. Of the three pieces they presented, *Sundance*, *Warrior*, and *Tailgunner*, the first I didn't understand; *Warrior* was interesting and attractive; and *Tailgunner* looks like a sure hit. *Warrior* consists of two "laser" swordsman who attack each other in an attempt to either destroy the opponent or knock him down a bottomless pit. The controls are initially difficult to master, but the game is cleverly done and intriguing. *Tailgunner*, on the other hand, can be picked up immediately. (Steve Shoemaker should love it.) Three target planes are flying toward the player, and it is his job to line up a gun sight to fire and destroy them before they leave the screen. A force shield, when utilized at the proper time, will prevent the ships from making an escape, which is important because when you lose ten ships, the game is over. I liked it. I ordered it.

17. The great god Atari came on a bit meek at AMOA '79. One theory, I've been told, for the lack of really new games this year is the fear of copying by other companies. Perhaps this problem dictated Atari's policy of showing mostly old or already released games such as its giant *Hercules* pinball and its phalanx of table configuration sports games. A color monitor driving game, *Monte Carlo*, (a done-over *Superbug*) and *Asteroids*, a space theme target game in which a spacecraft tries to destroy large asteroids and flying saucers for points were the only new pieces. I must confess that *Asteroids* did not send me into orbit. (Nolan, we need you.)

18. *Head On 2*, would you believe, was the feature selection at Sega/Gremlin. Take a great game, add color, new course configuration, new sound effects, and you've got it. But the game that turned me on at this booth was *Monaco GP*, a sit-down driving game utilizing a color monitor. The game is essentially a jazzed up *Wheels* but is nicely done with different width road patterns, puddles, tunnels, gravel, and night driving. The cabinet is race car cockpit shaped; the game offers many options and displays the top five scores. In video games, this piece had to be among the best.

19. Things dull around the ol' arcade? How about a player piano to set your toes a tapping? Wandering about the Exidy display, I snatched a free straw hat off the top of an old piano. What's a piano doing here? I asked myself. Myself says, "See that slot on the upper right hand corner, dummy. What do you think a piano is doing here?" That's right. Exidy's got coin-operated player pianos so if you can't afford a *Showtime* video disc jukebox, well...

'The Metaphaser looks like a double hair dryer with a stool on each side.'

20. Midway, which still can't keep up with the *Space Invaders* demand, showed, would you believe, *Deluxe Space Invaders*. Midway also had a sit-down driving game, *Super Speed Race*, similar to the Sega *Monaco GP* but lacking a little of the latter's pizzazz. An all-new Midway video piece, *Phantom II*, seems to borrow a little from any number of past flying games. Maybe the mix will work though this game offers only one innovation: the backlit display flashes when the player scores a hit on the video screen. The game mode requires the player to operate a single joystick/fire button which controls one aircraft on the screen that is attempting to shoot down two other target planes. I was most reminded of Atari's *Jetfighter* of some years past, but this game allows initials to be placed proudly behind high scores. So if everybody in town knows your initials you can be a hero.

21. Got room for a motorcycle on your route or in your arcade? Check with the Empire Distributing people. Somewhere around the booth I almost got run over by a Harley. I'm just kidding about the Harley; truthfully, it was an Italian motorcycle mounted on a treadmill-type arrangement in a game called *Moto Cross Test* by Zaccaria. Don't worry about gasoline fumes, the bike is electrically driven. I don't think I can use one, but if Empire will throw Sophia Loren in on the deal, I will make room.

22. Direct from Japan of significance was Namco's *Zero In*, a flying plane simulator type game reminiscent of the MCI *Flying Ace* but smaller and more sophisticated. You're the pilot firing rockets at attacking fighters. The chase is fast-paced and the effects realistic. A jewel of a game, sure to be picked up by a local manufacturer.

Universal, a newcomer to these shores, impressed with two *Space Invader* type games, *Cosmic Guerilla* and *Galaxy Wars*. I really like *Galaxy Wars* which had some unique twists of its own including congratulatory messages after clearing the screen of targets. Clear enough screens and the machine says, "I give up!"

Taito's most original entry was *Super Road Champions*, a color monitor two-player driving game (cabinet configuration, *Sprint 2*) which consisted of a road race track (*a la* Sega *Fonz*) but with somewhat independent control for each of the two players. Definite possibilities.

23. *Morgana* is not new but it was my first seance. A fortune-telling machine from Bacchus Games, *Morgana* utilizes a holographic device to project a speaking face that reveals mysterious truths and predictions. I pushed the appropriate buttons and waited for the response. Sure enough, *Morgana* hit it on the head. She said, "If I couldn't shoot ducks any better than you, I'd consider tiddly-winks."

24. Bet a lot of you didn't try the *Metaphaser*? I knew it. But never fear, Welu is here. The *Metaphaser* looks like a double hair dryer with a stool on each side. Two people place their heads inside the shrouds and then watch, transfixed, as their facial features blend, combine, and interchange. It's a weird machine all right. "Going to get one?" my wife asked. "Naw," I said, "who'd want to get a nose like mine inter-changed on his face."

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OMAA survey reports:

Overhaul that jukebox copyright law

The jukebox copyright law definitely needs to be overhauled. That's what a significant majority of Ohio operators reported in a recent survey conducted by the Ohio Music and Amusement Association. But operator's suggestions and objections to the law varied greatly.

Twenty-nine percent reported they had sent in a list of their locations while 71 percent said they hadn't. The time operators spent compiling the information required by copyright law averaged 37.5 hours. And the cost per operator was usually around $370.

One of the necessary bits of information to be included on the machine license, of course, is the manufacturer's serial number. Thirteen percent of the Ohio operators felt that it is unnecessary while 87 percent didn't object.

The high mobility of phonographs, operators insist, makes record-keeping difficult to impossible. But the licensing authorities feel otherwise. According to the survey, it seems that the phonograph business is highly mobile—operators changed machines at different rates. Seventy-one percent of those replying changed them under 25 percent of the time; 21 percent of those replying changed them between 26-50 percent; eight percent of those replying changed them between 51-75 percent; and no one answering the questionnaire changed them over 76 percent.

Thirteen percent of the operators reported that they had been checked by ASCAP, BMI, or another performing arts association, while 87 percent said they had not. Among those who had been checked, one operator noted that a suit had been filed; in another instance, a performing rights society sent a letter to a location about the background music that was being used.

Far fewer than half of the operators—21 percent, to be exact—knew of anyone in their area who had legal action filed against them. One operator recalled that a $1,000 fine had been assessed, while another northeast Ohio operator reported that he also was fined. Another operator knew of a law suit that was filed and still pending.

Comments about the copyright fee that operators are required to pay, including filing procedures, usually were unfavorable.

One operator complained that the law was "too time-consuming and opened the door for increases." Others grumbled that "it is unfair to provide serial numbers since phonos in the shop or traded in are not being played" and "as old boxes are taken out of service, we should be able to use the same license on the box that replaces it."

Other complaints pointed out that it was "just another tax that is unnecessary" and there was "too much paperwork involved."

"The copyright fee is collected at least twice, once when we buy the record when it's built into the price and again when we remit the eight dollars," said another operator, who also found the cost of compiling the information objectionable.

Another complaint touched on the volatile location list requirement. "I do not see any need, nor have I ever been told by anyone, what purpose there would be in having the government, and any other agency, know the name and address of the operator's locations. I believe that it is up to the performing arts associations to check the locations to see if there is a jukebox with a license on it. It should be up to them to check with the owner of the location to see who owns and operates the jukebox. If the establishment owner would not give them the information, then it should be assumed that it is owned and operated by the establishment and then they should be required to pay any fine."

And from another—"It isn't anyone's business how much or how many machines each company owns and operates. Information could fall into the wrong hands and be used to our disadvantage, i.e., accrued taxes on estimated income, etc."

One person thought that the solution to the current requirement which forces operators to list their locations might lie in the past. "We should be able to purchase the stamp as we did when the federal government collected the tax during the '40s and '50s."

One of the few moderate voices noted, "at this time, we have no complaints. However, if the amount were to be substantially increased, our complaints would be loud."

"I can live with the eight dollars per year license fee," another operator acceded, "but what concerns me is the Copyright Royalty Tribunal's future plans. It could be twenty dollars or even fifty dollars per unit if the CRT desires. I do not understand why the Tribunal requires the manufacturer's name and serial number on each license. Without this, the operator's time spent on the licensing would be reduced by at least 95 percent."

The amount of the tax at present seems to be more or less accepted but the most common operator complaint with the current copyright law was put most succinctly, perhaps, by this operator:

"My main concern is, what is next? Tax of free plays? Does paying out ever stop?"

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Custom player newsletter service debuts

A new custom player newsletter service was introduced at A.M.O.A. by Business Builders of Cupertino, California, a promotion agency specializing in the amusement industry.

"The newsletter gives operators an excellent tool for player promotion," noted Carol Kantor, head of the new agency. "From the response at the trade show it is evident that operators want to implement more promotion to enhance their business. Business Builders has developed this newsletter program to help fulfill this need in the industry." This is one of the promotion programs to be offered to help enhance game play activity and encourage more player participation and competition.

The "customized newsletter" offered by Business Builders features the local players and events on pages one and four of the four page publication. Custom coupons for players, special announcements and competitions are also part of the custom portion. The inside spread (pages two and three) features a wide variety of general interest articles for players, such as, play tips on popular games, puzzles and contests, and related news items.

Business Builders has developed this program to minimize the effort needed at the local level to collect sufficient inputs for the custom pages. Each participating operator will determine ahead of time the overall format, types of articles and coupon offers for each issue.

A system will be developed to collect the inputs for the current issue to provide the best coverage for local players, employees, and special events to be reported.

"Only a limited number of operators will be participating in the program," reported Kantor. "Because these will be in different geographic areas, the 'shared' inside pages will be exclusive for the players in each participating center."

Pizza Time cops loan bucks

Pizza Time Theatre, Inc., Cupertino, and its "rodent emcee," Chuck E. Cheese, announced they are the recipients of a $2 million long-term loan from Bank of America's International Science Branch.

The money, according to President Joseph F. Keenan, will be used to open more company-owned stores in the rapidly-expanding chain of family entertainment centers.

Games—electronic and arcade—along with three-dimensional, computer-controlled animals and a quality pizza restaurant have been combined to create the Pizza Time Theatre formula. The company presently operates six stores in San Jose, Concord, Stockton, Sacramento and Huntington Beach, California, with additional units under construction in Sparks, Nevada; Citrus Heights, California; Kansas City, Missouri; and Overland Park, Kansas.

"Prior to opening our first prototype two years ago in San Jose," said Keenan, "we spent $2.5 million on research and development, mostly for the sophisticated electronic software and hardware we use in our Cyberamics animation system. Profit margins will be up this year because we'll be operating eight units by the end of this month, compared with one unit last year at the same time. We expect to continue through 1980 with our expansion, scheduling two store openings a month. Of course, some of those will be franchised units.

"Individual store revenue is averaging $1 million per year. That'll buy a lot of cheese," Keenan added with a laugh, "but the credit goes to our furry, funny master of ceremonies, the one-and-only Chuck E. Cheese."

Company sales for 1979 are estimated at $3 million with 1980 system sales expected to exceed $20 million. "Not bad for a rambunctious rat, a purple monster, some jabbering magpies, and an 800-pound singing hippo," reported Keenan.

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Australian show set

Queensland, Australia, a world renowned surfer's paradise "down under," invites the worldwide coin-operated industry to the National Australian A.M.O.A. to be held July 16-20, 1980.

Inquiries may be directed to: The Secretary, A.M.O.A. QLD., Confederation of Industry, "Industry House," 375 Wickham Terrace, Brisbane, Australia 4000.

Australian A.M.O.A. officials urge interested parties to book early and "make it a holiday time."

Williams service schools set

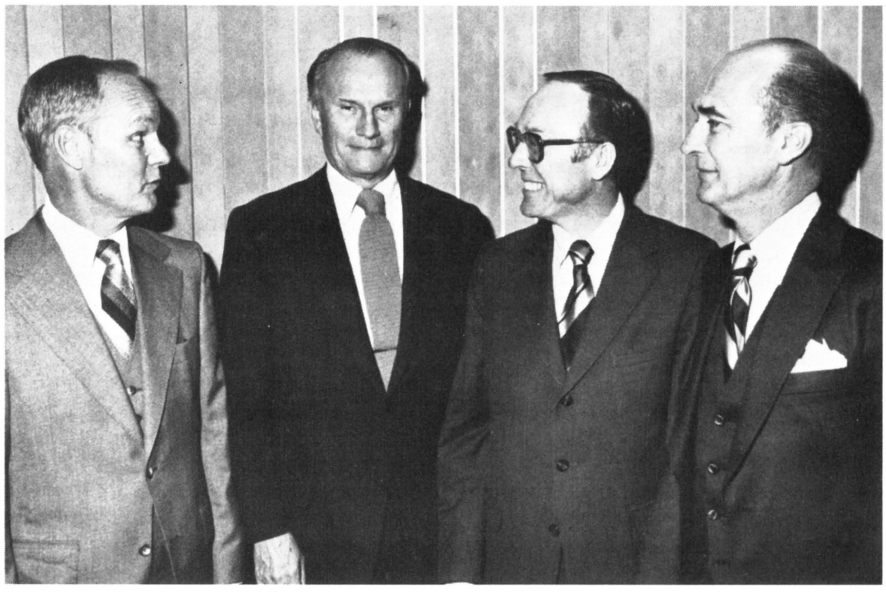
Williams will be conducting service schools during January with locations ranging from Honolulu, Hawaii to Jacksonville, Florida.

Each school is conducted in a single day and covers theory of operation and troubleshooting techniques.

Arrangements to attend must be made with the designated distributor. The dates and locations are as follows:

January 8-9 in Los Angeles, distributor—Circle International, Los Angeles; January 11 in San Diego, distributor—Circle International; January 14 in Phoenix, distributor—Circle International; January 15 in Tucson, distributor—Circle International; January 17-18 in Honolulu, distributor—Circle International; January 22 in Miami, distributor—Belam-Florida, Miami; January 24 in Tampa Bay, distributor—Belam-Florida; and January 29 in Jacksonville, Belam-Florida.

Schools recently completed included a December 13 meeting in San Antonio, with arrangements handled by Southwest Vending in San Antonio.



1980 NAMA Officers are, from left to right: senior vice chairman, John B. Edgerton, Jr., Automatic Products Company, St. Paul, Minn.; chairman, Allan P. Lucht, Servomation Corporation, Greenwich, Conn.; vice chairman, Jerry L. Zaug, Zaug's Inc., Appleton, Wis.; and treasurer, Howard C. Miller, Jr., Canteen Corporation, Chicago.

Allan P. Lucht named NAMA chairman for 1980

Allan P. Lucht, chairman and president of Servomation Corporation, Greenwich, Connecticut, recently was elected chairman of the board of directors of the National Automatic Merchandising Association (NAMA), the national association of the vending and foodservice management industry.

Named for a one-year term beginning in January, Lucht will succeed Paul F. McClinton of Automatic Chef Company, Waco, Texas.

Other new NAMA officers for 1980 are, senior vice chairman, John B. Edgerton, Jr., president of Automatic Products Company, St. Paul, Minnesota; vice chairman, Jerry Zaug, president, Zaug's, Inc., Appleton, Wisconsin; and treasurer, Howard C. Miller, Jr., president and chief executive officer of Canteen Corporation, Chicago.

The election took place at a board meeting held during the 1979 NAMA convention and trade show at McCormick Place. NAMA officials predicted 1979 vending and food service management sales volume of more than $15 billion.

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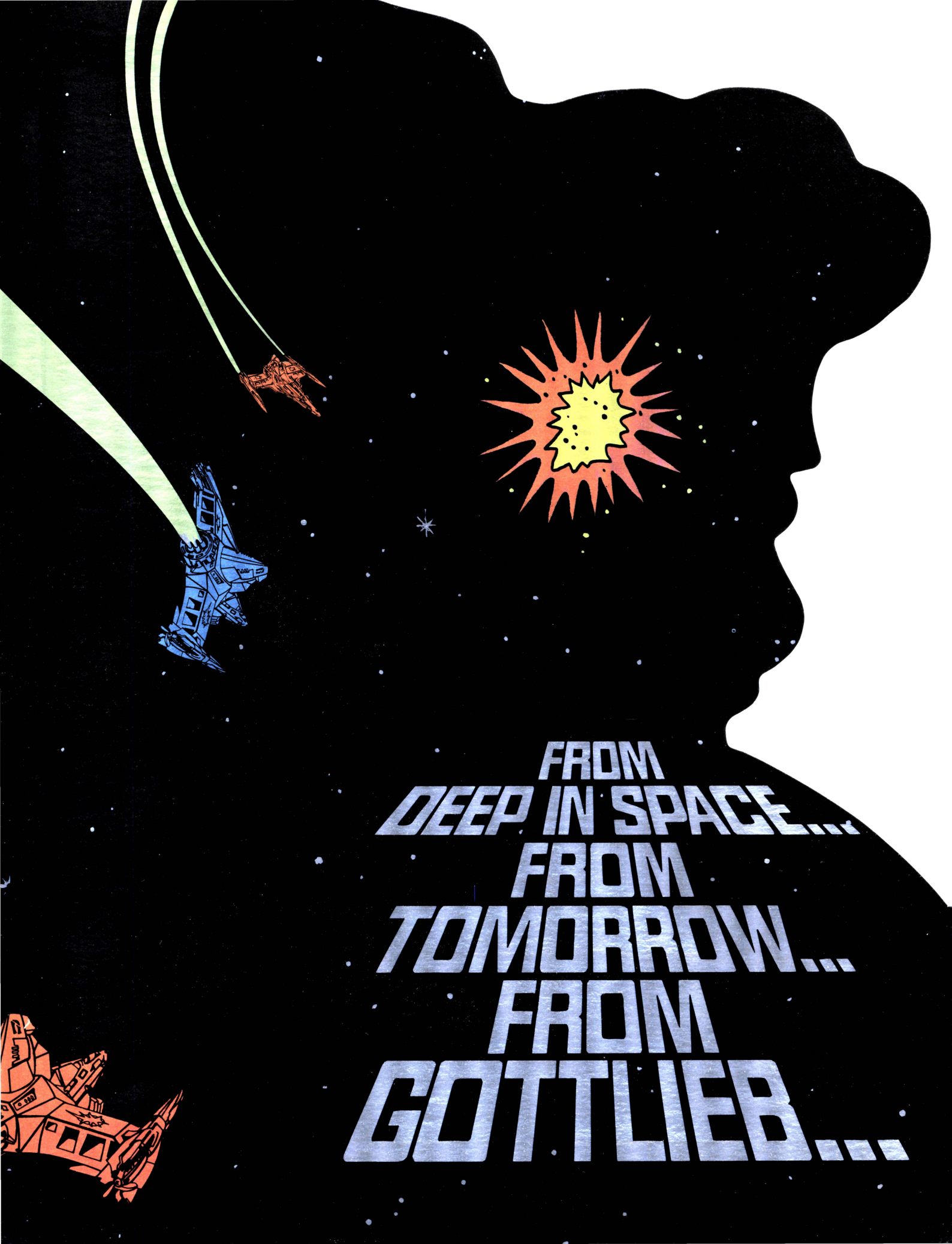
OMAA membership increases

The membership committee of the Ohio Music and Amusement Association, composed of Richard E. George, Jack Silvernell and Tommy Thompson, report several new operator memberships.

They are as follows: John R. Garrett, Entertainment Unlimited, West Chester, Ohio; Namie and John Rizek, Big City Vending Company, Columbus, Ohio; and Virginia Woodland and Irv Kepler, W-K Music Company, Columbus, Ohio.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FROM
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FROM
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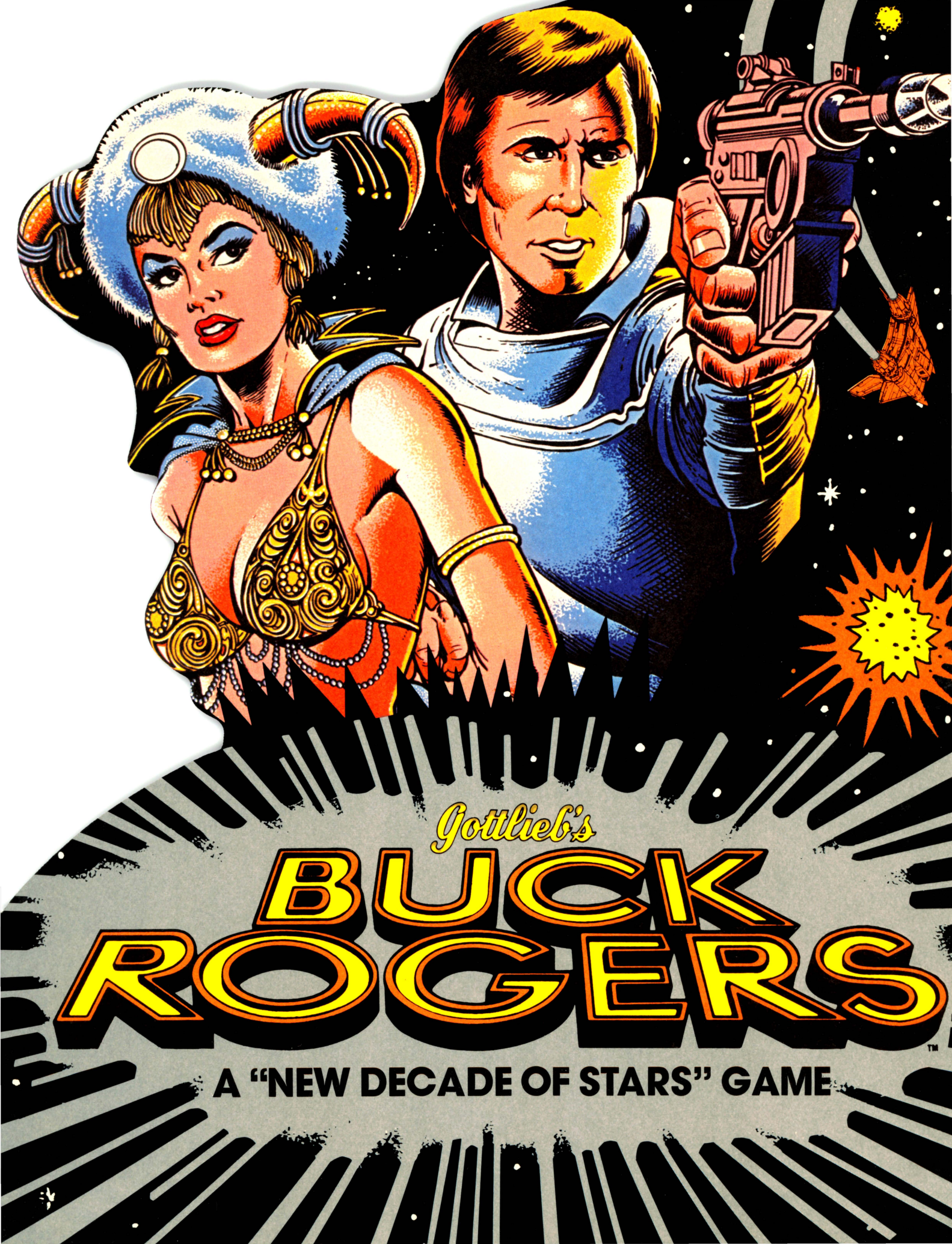
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Play Meter Equipment Poll

Here are the December results of PLAY METER's subscriber survey ranking pinball and video games. Rankings are compared with games' standings in the last month's poll.

Top Pins

DECEMBER	NOVEMBER
1. FLASH/Williams	1
2. KISS/Bally	2
3. PARAGON/Bally	3
4. SUPERMAN/Atari	4
5. SHARPSHOOTER/Game Plan	6
6. PLAYBOY/Bally	5
7. (tie) METEOR/Stern	10
(tie) HARLEM GLOBETROTTERS/Bally	10
9. STAR TREK/Bally	7
10. GENIE/Gottlieb	15
11. STELLAR WARS/Williams	—
12. TOTEM/Gottlieb	8
13. (tie) EIGHT BALL/Bally	—
(tie) MATA HARI/Bally	19
15. TRI ZONE/Williams	9
16. SUPERSONIC/Bally	15
17. (tie) LOST WORLD/Bally	14
(tie) COUNT-DOWN/Gottlieb	15
19. DRACULA/Stern	—
20. PHOENIX/Williams	—

Top Videos

DECEMBER	NOVEMBER
1. SPACE INVADERS/Midway	1
2. FOOTBALL/Atari	3
3. SPRINT II/Atari	2
4. (tie) LUNAR LANDER/Atari	8
(tie) HEAD ON/Gremlin	4
6. STAR FIRE/Exidy	6
7. SPACE WARS/Cinematronics	5
8. BASKETBALL/Atari	10
9. SEA WOLF/Midway	9
10. CRASH/Exidy	7

The PLAY METER subscriber survey of pinball and video games will be a regular feature in subsequent PLAY METER publications. If you would like to join readers currently participating in the survey, simply fill out the coupon below and return it to PLAY METER.

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N.B. Please make sure you print your name legibly on the return address portion of the survey card.

Phonograph Buyers' Guide

'Atlanta 200' to Bring Music to Millions

Wurlitzer, which advertises its wares as bringing "music to millions," is premiering its *Atlanta 200 Electronic* this year, a 200-selection jukebox with an automatic play stimulator which plays the same record every ten to thirty minutes.

The stimulator is adjustable after the last selection.

The brightly colored *Atlanta 200* also features stereo transistorized silicon amplifier with overload protection and puts out 160 watts of total music power. Microprocessor controlled, the stereo sports a Shure magnetic pick-up with diamond stylus.

An electronic credit accumulator can handle up to 255 selections. An electronic selections storage is standard equipment as well. Play prices, too, are easy to change.

The play sequence may be according to selection sequence or according to location in the record magazine. And the large three digit LED display indicates credit selection and record playing.

Records are stored in a vertical position, although they are played horizontally. The turntable unit is equipped with a condenser synchron motor. The popularity meter provides up to date information on what's being played.

Plug connectors for the auxiliary amplifier, external speakers, remote control and microphone all are integrated in the streamlined cabinet. Remote selections may be instituted from a standard wall box via an adapter.

Voltage may be either 100-240.

Options in the *Atlanta 200* include a wireless infrared remote volume control, and credit card readers.

The burgundy-colored stereo is 51 and ½ inches high, and 25 inches deep.

Wurlitzer also is spotlighting the *Atlanta 160*, the *Hideaway*, the *Lyric*, the *Tarock*, the *Cabarina*, and the *Carillon*, which is available in two different cabinets, this season.

Attractive 'Techna 480' Profit Maker

Techna 480, Rock-Ola's new 160 selection phonograph, brings together the "proven added-profit makers" introduced one year ago and an attractive cabinet design with exciting illuminated graphics on the front and both sides," the Chicago-based manufacturer said.

"Rock-Ola engineers and designers took the play stimulators from *Mystic* and packaged them in a new cabinet to create *Techna*," Executive Vice President Edward G. Doris said. "The three-sided wrap-around graphics, cabinet configuration and customer control area are all designed to produce maximum player interest and operation."

"Tests have shown that the new wrap-around graphics provide maximum customer attraction," Doris reported. "Backlighted three-dimensional colors on the front of *Techna* continue around into the escutcheon-type panelling of both sides. The colors sweep upward in the pyramidal shaped hexagon design of the sides. In practically all locations, *Techna* will draw customer attention from every point in the room," the vice president noted.

Techna's new upright cabinet has two other special features: it measures just over 24" in depth, so it will fit almost anywhere, and has no flat, level surfaces so there is no place for people to set drinks, food, or smokes. Also, there is no place for people to sit on the new phonograph.

Improved versions of Rock-Ola's exclusive bonus feature, top three location hits and random complimentary play are included in *Techna*. "Feedback from operators indicate these innovations have increased play up to 100 percent in locations," Doris said. "These three features allows operators to custom-tailor each phonograph to the individual requirements of all locations."

Rock-Ola's bonus can be adjusted quickly to operate three different ways. The completely random bonus can be set to operate within a ten to thirty minute interval, or a twenty to sixty minute pattern. If desired, the bonus can be shut off completely. When the bonus light flashes, customers have three minutes to insert money and take advantage of bargain prices. Adapting *Techna* to the exact prices desired for each location is accomplished by pushing a few toggle switches inside the cabinet. *Techna*'s new coin mechanism will accept the new Susan B. Anthony one-dollar coin. And with Rock-Ola's bonus feature, it is possible to give special bargain plays for the new coin.

The top three location hits automatically computes and displays the three most popular hits played on each *Techna*. Its random complimentary play takes over when there is a temporary lull in play. The phonograph randomly chooses and plays a record at differing intervals within the two time sequences mentioned before.

Periodic maintenance or servicing of *Techna* has been simplified. The dome section swings up and locks into a choice of two positions. The lower cabinet door drops down, and the customer control panel opens out. If speakers, wallboxes, or other accessories are being added, a rear access panel can be removed.

Behind the *Techna* is a series of microprocessor controlled and computer operated electronic plusses. Rock-Ola's profit-setter enables the operator to customize regular prices, bonus features and random complimentary play in seconds by touching appropriate switches.

The hit-tracker continually computes and displays the top three location hits. A memory bank in the hit tracker records the number of times each selection is played, and will display this information on demand starting from the most played up to 999 times, or the least played, beginning with zero. It also will display on request the total number of selections played.

A new opto-sensor and microprocessor operated logic board has increased the speed and dependability of record selection, company executives reported.

The new *Techna* cabinet measures 24-7/8 inches in depth, 54-7/8 inches in height, and 42 inches in width. The cabinet utilizes a webster walnut vinyl woodgrain finish enhanced by anodized metal extrusions. Specially tempered glass protects all back-lighted graphic areas.

The 'Tempo-Disco'-- Lots of Lights and Lots of Action

Lights and lots of action turn the Rowe *Tempo-Disco* into a "miniature disco."

When there's no music playing, the lights flash to a pre-determined pattern. But when the music begins, things really get interesting: lights pulse and throb to the beat, bathing the location in the excitement, company executive reported.

Speakers are up top, the title strip is backlighted, and the entire unit sits atop a base that gives the whole unit a pedestal effect.

Higher volume, plus better tone quality, makes this jukebox a "feast" for the ears. There's a new speaker system, powered by more true watts than on any competitive system.

New features include a central control computer which in addition to its regular duties, now displays total selections and cash intake since last reset, as well as total plays on an individual selection. All are digitally displayed at the touch of a button.

Also, Rowe has introduced a most popular record display that flashes the number of the location's most selected record. It lets customers play number one, number two, number three, depending on credit, hits, just by pushing the appropriate button.

An all new control system is used. It has a central micro-computer on the main computer board, which it gives the *Tempo-Disco* high reliability and ease of service. Combined with an improved mechanism, it makes the unit very inexpensive to maintain, Rowe said.

The central control computer is modular, and controls the other modules (mechanical control, selector, price board, etc.) for ease of service.

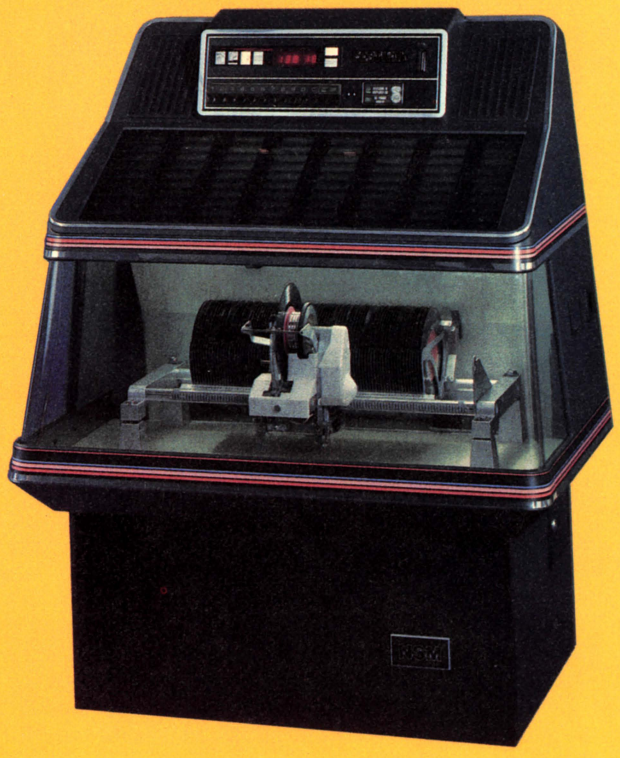
The modular construction is followed throughout the phonograph. The amplifier, power supply, output transformers, and more, can be replaced in seconds if necessary.

The jukebox can be serviced entirely from the front.

The *Tempo-Disco* is also available in two other versions, the *Tempo* and the *Prelude*, plus a different console model, the *Kentwood*.

The stereo is 53 inches high, 41 and ½ inches wide and 28½ inches deep. It weighs 365 pounds and is available in a 120 V.A.C. or 220 V.A.C. model.

1980 Technology Evident in 'Festival 160'



NSM's new *Festival 160* puts phonograph technology firmly into the 1980s and "that means big sales benefits for NSM operators," company officials note.

Performance features include 140 watts of music power that filters through eight balanced speakers. The key-operated bonus playtime which keeps the music coming—"keeping the atmosphere alive," executives report—prompts more full rate plays. And the multiple coin acceptor takes coins in any combination.

NSM feels that its design features, such as the visible selector-player mechanisms and the housing that offers no refuse for glass, are "proven" winners. No glass spills, of course, means fewer service problems.

Flashing signs also are incorporated in the new *Festival ES 160* which gives the price per play on those occasions the *Festival* is not in use. Large digital display numbers show the position of the record selected in the top nine hits list for each particular location.

Easier servicing is something NSM kept in mind when they instituted an easy test program. The cabinet of the new *Festival* opens and a "diagnostic" test sequence is ready for a simple push-button operation.

To determine which records are being listened to the most, an easy information gathering option is available in the *Festival*. Just push the buttons for total cash receipts, A-side plays, B-side plays, special plays, etc., or check the popularity meter for up to 99 plays.

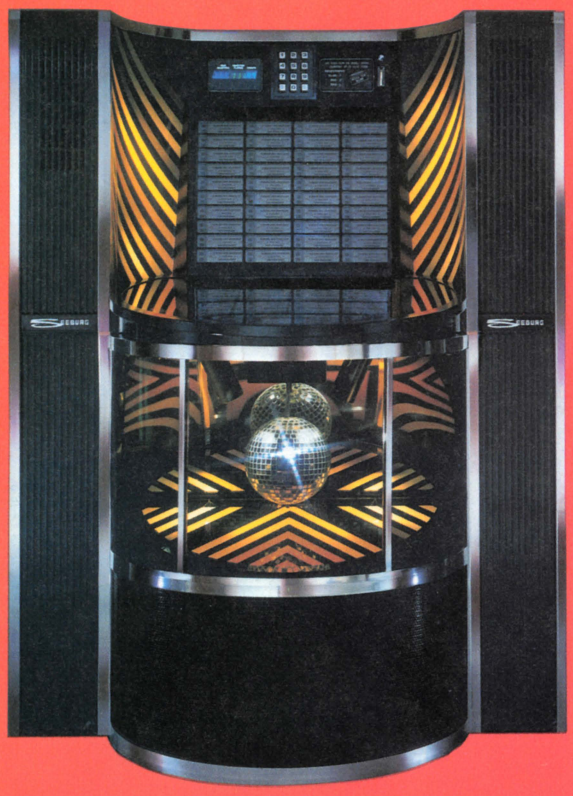
Repricing, which sometimes presents problems, will be easier with the *Festival*, NSM officials said. And the easy cash memory—a special PC board option which gives the collector an automatic memory that will read-out back at the accounts office—can handle details from up to 16 phonos.

The cabinet sports a show case through which you can watch the playing mechanism. The vertical mechanism can handle 80 45 rpm records, or 160 selections. The push button digital selector also is equipped with hit and correct buttons.

The speakers (four per channel for a total of eight) are two high frequency, two midrange installed at earlevel, two woofers and two midrange base-mounted. Two separate amplifiers with AVC, bass and treble control, are integrated in the control center. Total music power is 150 watts.

The unit, which weighs 277 pounds net, has a compact power supply which feeds all internal units. The correct supply is indicated by LED.

Other optional accessories include an NSM wallbox Consulette, output transformer, and an electromechanical totalizer.



'Phoenix' to Feature Player Convenience

Seeburg engineers designed the *Phoenix* for super customer play convenience.

The *Phoenix* customer play theater incorporates all music play features in this one location, the company reported. The eight digit illuminated microcomputer display panel, ten button electronic digital selector, coin slot (which, incidentally, now accepts the new "Sue Buck" coin), dollar bill acceptor accessory and title display panel are all special features of the *Phoenix*.

The eight digit microcomputer display panel is a unique addition which communicates important information to the customer.

For instance, the three digit number of the record the customer is buying is noted, as well as the three digit number of the record being played, and the two digits that indicate the number of credits for future play.

If a customer selects an improper music number, a number not shown on the phonograph music program, an illuminated "error" display lights instantly. This indicates to the customer that a selection mistake has been made. The customer then knows a re-selection of music is necessary.

Columnar speaker modules incorporated into the *Phoenix* phonograph design utilize modern sophisticated audio engineering techniques.

Seeburg engineers also have mounted two matched exponential horns at ear level to achieve a wide angle dispersion of midrange and high frequency sounds.

Base mounted woofers in tuned enclosure achieve all richness in the complete bass musical range.

In addition, the system incorporates crossover network at both a soft or loud level of volume.

Combine these speaker components with a powerful 200-watt stereo amplifier, and you have a stereo sound system that surrounds your location with stereo sound.

Two amplifier controls provide nine different audio combinations to satisfy the acoustical requirements of virtually any location.

Title display panels bring all 160 *Phoenix* music selections into a compact viewing area to make music buying easier. The display is softly backlighted.

The new Seeburg *Phoenix* measures 54½ inches high, forty inches wide and 28 3/8 inches deep.

The *Phoenix* phonograph allows customers to buy their music with any combination of coins. And any combination up to one dollar's worth of play will give free bonus selections.

A ten-button play panel controls the selection of all 160 music titles. A fast-action telephone type panel lets customers select music simply by pressing a series of three numbered buttons for each selection. Numbers played register instantly.

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Pinball comes of age

By Ralph C. Lally II

"We are going to make pinball a professional sport," asserted Game Plan's Ken Anderson at a distributor's meeting held at Chicago's posh Ritz Carlton the weekend of the AMOA convention.

The announcement, which took a number of Game Plan distributors by surprise, left the impression that Game Plan was setting out to do to pinball what Tournament Soccer has done to foosball.

Planners realized that a professional organization, staffed by professionals, was imperative before pinball could graduate from amateur status. To this end, the newly-established Professional Pinball Player's Association (PPPA) will be headed by Game Plan's legal counsel, a team of professional sports promoters, and PLAY METER's nationally known pinball expert and columnist, Roger Sharpe.

The primary goal of the organization, of course, will be to organize and promote professional pinball. Pro tournaments will be sanctioned by the PPPA at the local and national levels and "pro" cards will be issued to qualified players.

In order to qualify for "pro" status, aspiring players must register a certain score on a PPPA-sanctioned pinball machine, the first of which will be called *Challenger I*, during a special qualifying event. The manufacturer of the pin, not surprisingly, is Game Plan. Prototypes are scheduled to hit the streets shortly after January 1, 1980.

Challenger I will emphasize the skill factor and soft-pedal luck to make the pin "more difficult and more sophisticated than any existing pinball," Game Plan execs noted. The PPPA and the *Challenger I*, hopefully, will open up a number of new locations, bring a new image to pinball, and increase pinball play on a specific machine over a longer period of time.

Qualifying events will take place weekly at participating locations all over the country. Two hours will be set aside each week at every location that has a sanctioned machine. Players vying for "pro" status will have one free chance during the time period to cop the honor.

To avoid any possible legal problems, no entry fees will be charged and the specially designated machines will be set on free play for the two hour qualifying events. Each player plays four games, if the average score meets the minimum requirement of points, the player wins a "pro" card and the right to participate in all the pro tournaments for the year.

Planners hope that the qualifying events will give rise to a weekly social event at the participating locations, bringing players together and adding to the sports-like atmosphere of pinball.

Financing for the entire project will be accomplished by collecting $7 each week from every *Challenger I* pinball on location. Game Plan distributors will be responsible for collecting the fees from the participating operators. Operators and location owners, it follows, will share the expense of taking the $7 off the top of the weekly collection.

The distributors will forward the money to the PPPA, where it will be earmarked for promotion and cash prizes for sanctioned tournaments. The first $250,000 world championship, incidentally, already has been slated for Montreal, Canada.

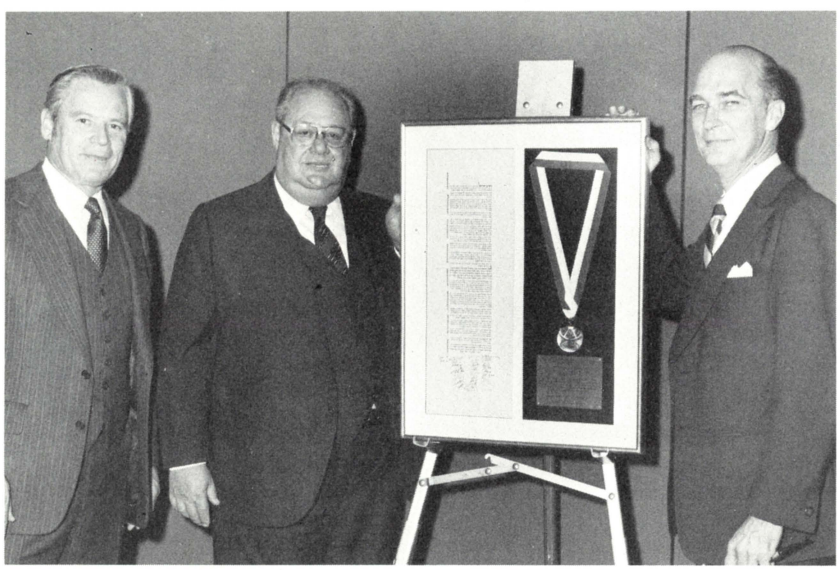
The professional sports promoters, retained by Game Plan to spearhead the endeavor, promises national television coverage of the world championship and extensive media coverage throughout the tour. Also, certified players will receive a monthly newsletter listing the top 50 players in the world, along with tournament news and results.

And if that's not enough to whet your interest, promoters also plan press conferences in each area where a tournament is being held in an effort to bring pinball into local sports pages where it belongs.

Commercial sponsors also are expected to be involved.

Ken Anderson may have summed the situation up best when he remarked that only "hard work and positive thinking" is needed to make the ambitious program work.

Let's hope he gets it.



William S. Fishman, center, chairman and chief executive officer of ARA Services, Inc., received the Israel Prime Minister's Medal at a national industry dinner in his honor on October 24, at which $8.5 million in Israel Bond purchases were recorded. Shown here with Fishman are Marvin Heaps, left, president of ARA Services, and Howard C. Miller, right, president of the Canteen Corporation. The dinner, held in Chicago, was attended by 600 representatives of the automatic merchandising industry.

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Banner of Philadelphia's offices are located near St. Peter's Church, site of the Pontiff's recent visit.

Banner's John Tomecsk of the electronics department managed to move in close enough to get a close shot of Pope John Paul II.

Banner of Philadelphia celebrates Pontiff's visit

Banner, distributors of coin operated equipment in Philadelphia, celebrated Pope John Paul II's visit in a big way.

The Pope's scheduled visit to St. Peter's Church to speak before the tomb of St. John Neuman, the first male American-born saint, happily was located within a half block of Banner.

Although employees turned out in great numbers, jockeying to get a glimpse of the pontiff, John Pursell of the accounting department was honored with the privilege of playing a solo trumpet selection. John Tomecsk of the electronics department, who is a member of the St. Peter's congregation, was able to snap close-range shots.

Distributors help bail out Seeburg

Seeburg Corporation, which filed a petition under chapter 11 of the U.S. Bankruptcy Code in federal courts of the northern district of Illinois last October, got its distributors to agree to a plan which may help the beleagured manufacturer out of its current financial problems.

Distributors agreed to buy specific numbers at a meeting in Chicago on November 9, guaranteeing purchases from Seeburg of at least $30 million of 160 selection equipment over the next 18 months at the newly announced prices. Additional sales of $10 million are anticipated from other product lines.

John Chapin, president of Seeburg, told PLAY METER that "the distributors formed a committee, which is guaranteed purchases, to formalize the plan, and agreed to it. And we haven't lost any distributors."

The bankruptcy (Update, December 1, 1979, page 1) was blamed on difficulties in procuring electronic assemblies of a model during the first four or five months of production last year.

"The buyers failed to supply them," Chapin said. "Because of that, our production schedule was severely restricted, and that distorted the financial picture for the entire year. We just didn't have the adequate quantities, and it eventually caught up with us. We just had to take a very positive business tactic."

The company filed under chapter 11, a new law which went into effect October 1 of this year.

Chapter 11 allows a corporation to consolidate its creditors. The bankruptcy court decides what amounts creditors are to receive, although an attorney unrelated to the Seeburg case noted that creditors in such cases "almost always receive less than they've claimed."

Although creditors may ask that a corporation be placed in bankruptcy, Seeburg filed the bank petition in this case.

Speaking on behalf of the company, attorney Joseph L. Matz said, "While the word bankruptcy appears in the name of the court and the law under which our case is filed, the reorganization case that we filed is not a bankruptcy case. The case was filed for the purpose of restructuring Seeburg's financial affairs."

Betti corporate headquarters move

H. Betti Industries, Inc., has moved its corporate offices and coin machine distributorship, Betson Enterprises, to new headquarters located at 6 Empire Boulevard, Moonachie, New Jersey 07074.

The new telephone number is 201-440-2200.

The facility, comprising 45,000 square feet of space, will enable Betti to triple the size of its parts, electronics and service departments.

Wico-Arkush unveils Parametric Analyzer

Wico-Arkush recently debuted its new Parametric Analyzer, a device which "eliminates shotgun repairs and identifies in-circuit component failure" on non-powered printed circuit boards, company officials note.

An oscilloscope add-on that allows testing of a component or device, it can "increase the productivity of service departments by decreasing the time spent on repairs," Wico-Arkush advises.

Among the components or devices analyzed are: computer circuits, interface circuits, driver circuits, digital logic, analog networks, electromechanical components, logic arrays, digital devices, discrete devices, discrete components, CPU's, memories, contacts and microswitches, and optoelectronic components, such as LEDs, LCDs, and ELDs.

The Parametric Analyzer is distributed by Wico.

New York distributor falls to his death

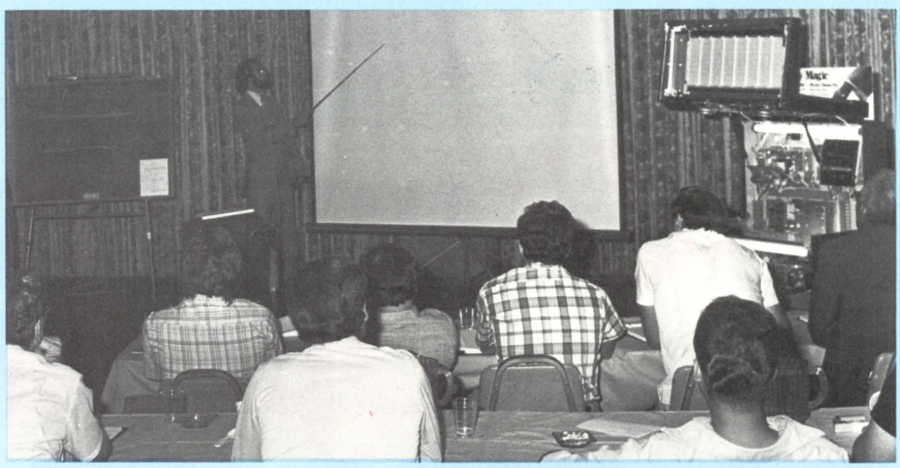
Bob Teisine, vice president of Coin Machine Distributors, Inc. died as a result of a fall from the window of his eight-story Peekskill, New York apartment.

Authorities said that the incident occured at 10:30 the morning of November 12.

At presstime, an autopsy was being made to determine the exact cause of death. It is not yet known whether or not Mr. Teisine jumped or fell.

Mr. Teisine is survived by his wife and daughter.

Gottlieb service engineer George Offshack conducts an A.M.A. Distributors-sponsored school in New Orleans on how to properly repair new Gottlieb pingames.



Rock-Ola service engineer Shuja Haque makes a point to operators and servicemen during a two-day service school about new Rock-Ola phonographs sponsored by A.M.A. Distributors in New Orleans.

Rock-Ola, Gottlieb schools held

To help service men of Louisiana and Mississippi operators better maintain and repair the latest Rock-Ola phonographs and Gottlieb pingames, A.M.A. Distributors, Inc. sponsored a four-day service school in the Fountain Bay Club Hotel in New Orleans recently.

Robert E. Nims, president of the New Orleans-based A.M.A. Distributors, Southern distributor of coin-operated amusement and music equipment, said a total of 85 operators and service personnel from the firm's two-state marketing area attended the sessions.

The two-day Rock-Ola school, October 2-3, was conducted by the manufacturer's service engineers, Shuja Haque and veteran Bill Findlay, with assistance from local Rock-Ola representative, Andrew LeBlanc. They lectured on the audio-mechanical and electronic aspects of the company's new solid state/microprocessor phonographs, such as model 478 *Mystic* and *model* 477 *Max*. The class was attended by 35 persons associated with 17 operators.

Gottlieb's one-day school, October 4, which was repeated October 5, attracted a total of 50 employed by 20 operators. Instruction was given by George Offshack, the firm's service engineer. He reviewed solid state design and operation, with heavy emphasis on on-location trouble-shooting procedure and repair technique for the new Gottlieb solid state pingames, *Totem* and *Genie*.

The A.M.A./Rock-Ola/Gottlieb school was held daily from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. in the hotel's Pelican Room. Lunch was served to all students during the four-day session.

A.M.A. Distributors, Inc., has been a Rock-Ola authorized distributor since 1958 when the New Orleans firm was established by Nims. A.M.A. took on distributorship of the Gottlieb line within the past year.

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- Starting and Managing the Arcade
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You will also have the opportunity to view the most updated and advanced product lines of the following companies in the exhibit hall:

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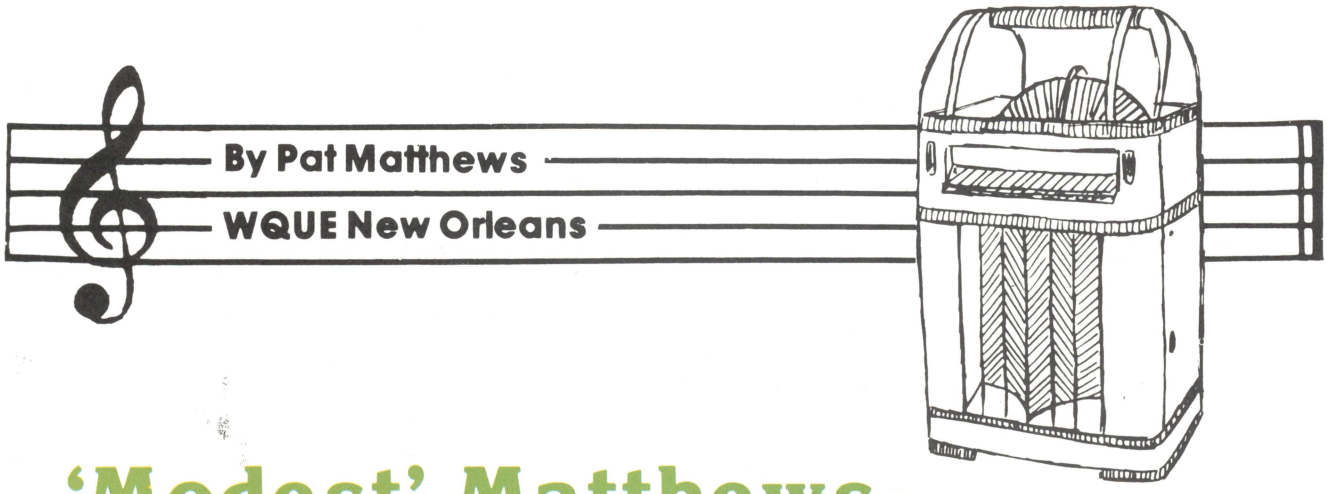

By Pat Matthews
WQUE New Orleans

'Modest' Matthews greets the new year

At Thanksgiving, I gave thanks to everyone at PLAY METER for having the wisdom to continue with me as a regular contributor to this super magazine. In my own small way, I like to do my share to make PLAY METER an even more read magazine. Now that a new year...and a new decade...is upon us, I'd just like the editors to say some words of praise about me. I'll give them some space right here: ( ).

Don't be shy. If you all need more room, go ahead and use it.

And on with the more pressing business at hand...

VOICES—Cheap Trick—Epic 9-50814

Here's the one I thought would be the first single from the Dream Police LP. It wasn't, but this follow-up to the title tune, "Voices," is a bold attempt by Cheap Trick to get some airplay on their acoustic stuff. So far their successes have been with the high energy rockers and this is not one of those. However, the "voices" which are weaved and arranged interestingly, serve as the strong point of this appropriately titled track. The quartet from the Mid-West checks in with a strong 8 out of 10 this time.

ROMEO'S TUNE—Steve Forbert—Nemperor ZS9 7525

This is great! It starts out with a very Southern sounding piano riff featuring organ overdubs. The whole thing has a very Dylan feel to it and Forbert's very unique vocalizing, complete with a strong chorus, add up to a very well-deserved hit record for an extremely talented young man. 8 out of 10.

MY FEET KEEP DANCING—Chic-Atlantic 3638

What we've got here is another formula record. It took a few songs to catch on but a Chic record is so trite at first listen that it hurts. The theme, the sound, the "scene" is getting worn. 8 out of 10 at best. I must admit, though, that there's a nice tap dance solo in the bridge.

DO YOU LOVE WHAT YOU FEEL—Rufus and Chaka—MCA MCA 41131

They're finally back together! And the wait was too long for all concerned. The writing talents of David Wolinski, coupled with the superb vocal stylings of Chaka Khan (with background help from David), combine for another one-two punch of soul rhythms at their best. It's funky and very danceable. An excellent horn and percussion rhythm arrangement highlight this instant smash. 9 out of 10 at least.

CHAIN GANG OF LOVE—Roy Clark—MCA MCA 41153

The genius of the six string is back with a bouncy little toe tapper that all Clark fans should love. With lines like "I'm your prisoner when you turn out the lights," moods should be set while listening to it. The only disappointment is that there is no spotlight on Clark as an instrumentalist on the record. It's co-written by Billy Edd Wheeler, who has had a recent monster succes co-penning Kenny Rogers' "Coward of the County." I give it a 9 out of 10 C&W.

NO CHANCE—Moon Martin—Capitol P-4794

Talk about reversal of styles—Martin has managed to go from the hard driving "Rolene" to the soft Buddy Holly sound of this tune. Acoustic and mellow seem to sum up the feeling. The vocals sound to me like a combination of the Everly Brothers, Buddy Holly, and Dennis Locorriere of Dr. Hook. Nice n' easy does it for him this time around and he's got an excellent chance to win everyone's hearts. A safe 7 out of 10 or better.

The records are rated as follows: 10 out of 10 = Top 10 peak; 9 out of 10 = Top 20 peak; 8 out of 10 = Top 30 peak; 7 out of 10 = Top 40 peak; 5 or 6 out of 10 = Somewhere in Top 100; 4 or less = Forget it, loser, break in half.

YOU KNOW THAT I LOVE YOU—Santana—Columbia 1-11144

This record is getting the biggest push Columbia has given a Santana record in recent memory. And it doesn't really need it. It doesn't sound a whole lot like what you'd expect from this super group searching for an identity. It's bouncy, commercial sounding and fluid in the right places (one of which is Carlos' guitar rides). Could be the shot they're looking for. 7 out of 10.

BACK UP AGAINST THE WALL—Atlanta Rhythm Section—Polydor PD 2039

Recorded live, this Atlanta Rhythm Section selection, culled from the group's "Are You Ready" LP, proves once again that they are one of the most consistent rock and roll bands around. "Back Up Against the Wall" is a good example of Southern Rock. It's the Dixie sound in its natural environment—jammin' and rollin' on stage. A real mover. 8 out of 10.

THIRD TIME LUCKY—Foghat—Bearsville BSS 49125

Sounding more like George Harrison than Foghat instrumentally it's one of those "why has it been so long?" type tunes. It has been a long one for Foghat, but the slight change in musical direction should prove to be just what the doctor ordered to revive this once dead band of very talented musicians. The vocals are just short of perfect and the guitars are the focal point. Watch this one fly. 8 out of 10—could fly higher, too!

MOVE YOUR BOOGIE BODY—Bar-Kays—Mercury 76015

God bless you, Robert Sherwood. Sherwood, president of Mercury, has kept a musical tradition on his label by keeping the Bar-Kays together. In "Move Your Boogie Body," the talents of the group shine through the vinyl. It's a booty shaker in the true sense of the phrase (even non-dancers like yours truly can find a *beat* in this one). Ooh—watch me move! This record is hot. Happy New Year, Bob. 10 out of 10 soul. 7 out of 10 pop.

WORTH A LISTEN

FOREVER MINE—The O'Jays—Philadelphia International
OH GIRL—Leo Sayer—Warner Brothers
LAST TRAIN TO LONDON—Electric Light Orchestra—Jet
HOOKED ON LOVE—Ian Gomm—Stiff

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_____**SHIPS**—BARRY MANILOW—Arista
_____**BABE**—STYX—A&M***
_____**NO MORE TEARS (ENOUGH IS ENOUGH)**—STREISAND AND SUMMER—Columbia/Casablanca***
_____**BROKEN HEARTED ME**—ANNE MURRAY—Capitol
_____**SEND ONE YOUR LOVE**—STEVIE WONDER—Motown***
_____**COWARD OF THE COUNTY**—KENNY ROGERS—United Artist
_____**ESCAPE**—RUPERT HOLMES—Infinity***
_____**IF YOU REMEMBER ME**—CHRIS THOMPSON—Planet***
_____**BETTER LOVE NEXT TIME**—DR. HOOK—Capitol
_____**JANE**—JEFFERSON STARSHIP—Grunt
_____**COOL CHANGE**—LITTLE RIVER BAND—Capitol
_____**TAKE THE LONG WAY HOME**—SUPERTRAMP—A&M***
_____**WE DON'T TALK ANYMORE**—CLIFF RICHARD—EMI
_____**HEAD GAMES**—FOREIGNER—Atlantic***
_____**IT'S ALL I CAN DO**—THE CARS—Elektra***
_____**THIS IS IT**—KENNY LOGGINS—Columbia
_____**ROCK WITH YOU**—MICHAEL JACKSON—Epic
_____**HALF THE WAY**—CRYSTAL GAYLE—Columbia***
_____**YOU'RE ONLY LONELY**—J.D. SOUTHER—Columbia***
_____**STILL**—COMMODORES—Motown***
_____**DO THAT TO ME ONE MORE TIME**—CAPTAIN & TENNILLE—Casablanca
_____**DREAMING**—BLONDIE—Chrysalis***
_____**HEARTACHE TONIGHT**—EAGLES—Asylum
_____**SARA**—FLEETWOOD MAC—Warner Brothers

PLAY METER FUNKIFIED

_____**CRUISIN'**—SMOKEY ROBINSON—Motown
_____**I WANNA BE YOUR LOVER**—PRINCE—Warner Brothers
_____**LADIES NIGHT**—KOOL & THE GANG—Delite
_____**ROCK WITH YOU**—MICHAEL JACKSON—Epic
_____**SEND ONE YOUR LOVE**—STEVIE WONDER—Motown***
_____**SONG FOR DONNIE**—WHISPERS—Solar
_____**EGO TRIPPING OUT**—MARVIN GAYE—Tamla
_____**NOBODY KNOWS**—ASHFORD & SIMPSON—Warner Bros.
_____**PLEASURE**—GLIDE—Fantasy
_____**ROLLER SKATIN' MATE**—PEACHES & HERB—Polydor
_____**STRANGER**—LTD—A&M
_____**BODY LANGUAGE**—SPINNERS—Atlantic

PLAY METER PICKIN' & GRINNIN'

_____**BROKEN HEARTED ME**—ANNE MURRAY—Capital
_____**COME WITH ME**—WAYLON JENNINGS—RCA***
_____**I CHEATED ME RIGHT OUT OF YOU**—MOE BANDY—Columbia
_____**I'VE GOT A PICTURE OF US ON MY MIND**—LORETTA LYNN—MCA
_____**COWARD OF THE COUNTY**—KENNY ROGERS—United Artist
_____**HELP ME MAKE IT THRU THE NIGHT**—WILLIE NELSON—Columbia
_____**YOU SHOW ME YOUR HEART (AND I'LL SHOW YOU MINE)**—TOM T. HALL—RCA
_____**YOU PICK ME UP**—DOTTIE WEST—United Artists
_____**NOTHING AS ORIGINAL AS YOU**—STATLER BROTHERS—Mercury
_____**MISSISSIPPI**—CHARLIE DANIELS BAND—Epic***
_____**POUR ME ANOTHER TEQUILLA**—EDDIE RABBITT—Elektra
_____**MISSIN' YOU**—CHARLIE PRIDE—RCA

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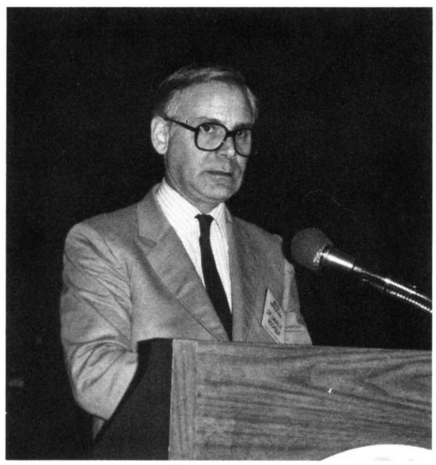
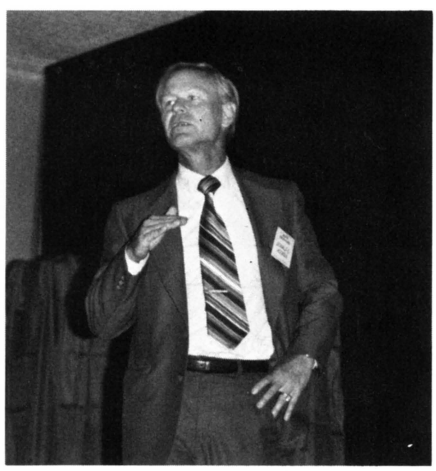
480 Techna rocks Rock-Ola distributors in Florida

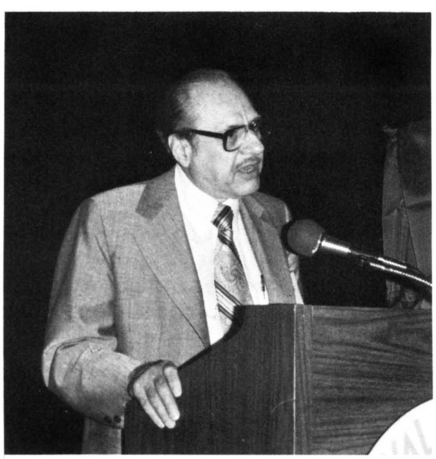
By Ralph C. Lally II



Board Chairman Dr. David Rockola



President Donald Rockola



Executive Vice President Ed Doris

The Rock-Ola Manufacturing Corporation's 480 Techna phonograph was unveiled at the Royal Biscayne Hotel in Key Biscaine, Florida, recently, at the annual Rock-Ola distributor's meeting.

Rock-Ola, of course, is the only domestic phonograph manufacturer that is represented by independent distributorships.

Rock-Ola Executive Vice President Ed Doris delivered the welcoming address, reminiscing about the "good old days" and reminding participants that we now are living the "good old days" of tomorrow. "Back in the good old days," Doris reported, "a phonograph sold for $500 but to get one fixed was a major problem. The good old days were not really that good compared to today, especially in regards to profits. Now is normal. There is nothing to get back to. The times have changed and change itself is, indeed, normal."

Perhaps the best news that Doris conferred was his report of recent surveys which indicate an upswing of the industry he called "recession-proof." "The American worker," he noted, "is working less overtime and spending more leisure time away from the job. Theater receipts are up ten percent this year and there is more interest than ever in dancing and rollerskating." Obviously, people now are spending more of their time in leisure endeavors.

Donald C. Rock-Ola, president of the Chicago-based manufacturing firm, addressed himself to the problem of static electricity in microprocessor systems. "When a correction becomes known," he said, "we immediately correct the problem in the new machines being manufactured. We then issue a service bulletin to the field so that immediate corrective action can be taken."

The solution to the static electricity problem was accomplished by the development of a new supplementary PC board that acts as a filter in preventing static charges from entering the microprocessor at the input level. This technical improvement has been incorporated in Rock-Ola's new line of phonographs.

Board Chairman Dr. David C. Rockola praised the positive results in the *Mystic* phonograph of last year. A considerable number of operators, he said, reported that they experienced an increase in earnings ranging from 25 percent to 100 percent.

Rockola noted the growing revenue that *Mystic* produced was due to its unique hit tracker device, which lends itself to more precise programming.

And although he admitted that the *Mystic* was not an easy act to follow, he assured the audience that its successor, the *Techna*, will continue to feature the hit tracker, the random complimentary play feature, and the bonus play feature. He added that technical modifications and improvements have been incorporated where they were necessary. But the biggest change in the new *Techna* was on the outside, not on the inside.

The *480 Techna* was conceived to bring a new form to phonograph art. And the all new revolutionary cabinet design, Rockola said, represented a most dramatic departure from conventional design. Brilliant colors that literally wrap around the ultra slim profile of the cabinet to achieve maximum visual impact. The new "upright" design features a full view of the title selections—no more bending or squatting. And, perhaps best of all, it is impossible for customers to sit their drinks or selves down on the cabinetry.

The newly designed unit is made of a stain and scratch-resistant material, with a rear service door for easy machine access. Dollar coins, too, are accepted by the new *480*, which boasts a powerful 200 watt amplifier, and features a new four-way speaker system with additional bass response.

For more on the new Rock-Ola phonographs, be sure to see the special Buyers Guide section inside this month's PLAY METER.

Xcor forms Gaming Devices, revenue expected from slots

Xcor International, Inc. recently announced the formation of Gaming Devices, Inc., a new subsidiary of its Williams Electronics, Inc. subsidiary. In the future, Xcor will manufacture and market its line of slot machines through this new subsidiary.

Gaming Devices, Inc. will begin immediately moving into newly leased facilities in Chicago.

In addition, the new subsidiary announced that it is currently manufacturing 546 slot machines, which should generate revenues in excess of $1 million for the Jockey Club Casino in Las Vegas, Nevada. These machines will be delivered in December, prior to the Jockey Club opening.

This order represents the largest single order to date for the company's slot machines. Upon completion of the order, deliveries of slot machines in 1979 will be at the highest level in the company's history.

Previously, slot machines were produced by Williams Electronics, Inc., which is also a leading manufacturer of pinball games.

"Although there are some overlaps in technology in the production of pinball games and slot machines, we decided to establish a separate business for the production and marketing of slot machines since there are entirely different marketing channels," noted James J. Hughes, president of Xcor International, Inc.

"The company has more than 600 slot machines in operation at the Resorts International Casino in Atlantic City. When our machines are installed in the Jockey Club, we will have gained a showcase for our product in the two major markets for gaming devices in the country," he added.

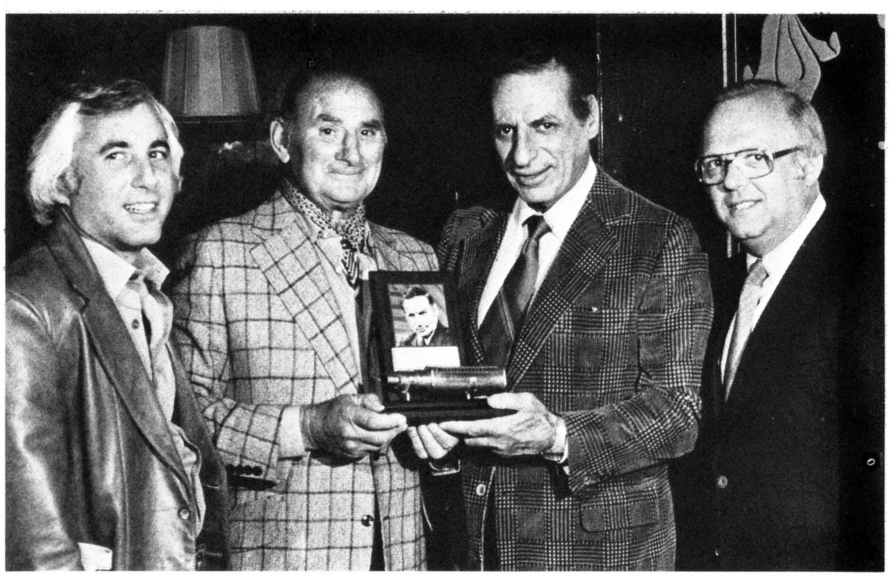
Hughes also reported that Williams Electronics, Inc., had on display at the AMOA Show production models of a new "talking" pinball called *Gorgar*.

"This is an example of last year's promise becoming this year's reality," he said. "At the AMOA Show last year we had a prototype model of a talking pinball machine on display. This year, we are showing production models which we are shipping all over the world.

"These machines use the latest microprocessor technology to achieve the effect of a human voice speaking to the player."

Williams Electronics, Inc. expects that in 1980, field acceptance of *Gorgar* will be the same as experienced by Williams' 1979 game of the year, *Flash*.

Headquartered in Oak Brook, Illinois, Xcor International, Inc. is a diversified manufacturing and service company. It manufactures vending machines, coin-operated amusement games, slot machines, musical instruments, and hearing aids, as well as operating a theater-in-the-round near Cleveland, Ohio.



Gary Stern, left, president of Stern Electronics, Inc., recently attended an awards presentation in Chicago honoring Sun-Times columnist Irv Kupcinet for his work with the National Jewish Hospital and Research Center and National Asthma Center. Stern is an elected member of the 1979 NJH/NAC Board of Trustees. With Stern at the event were Jack Musick, retired president of Hiram Walker; Kupcinet; and Ken Tucker of Tucker and Associates, who is also a NJH/NAC Trustee.

Seeburg holds school in Alaska

Jim Burdon, Seeburg music field engineer, conducted Seeburg phonograph service sessions recently during a two-stop hop covering territories of Anchorage and Fairbanks, Alaska.

The schools, sponsored by Seeburg distributor Music-Vend, Seattle, provide in-depth coverage of all Seeburg equipment for operators and their technical personnel in these areas.

The Anchorage session was held at Dale Haley's Arctic Music, 1036 East Fourth Street on October 16, and the Fairbanks school was held at Dan Thompson's Alaska Music facility, 1890 Marika on October 18.

Groundwork arrangements for the two-city service coverage was spearheaded by Music Vend district Sales Manager Dick Benjamin.

Irving Kaye appoints Floridian distributor

The Irving Kaye Company, manufacturers of pool tables, recently announced the appointment of Belam Florida Corporation as its exclusive distributor in the southern Florida territory.

Florida operators are invited to view the Kaye Company products at the Miami showroom and are advised that a good inventory is maintained at all times.

In other news at Kaye, Arnold Kaye and Bruce Antonio just returned from an extensive tour that took them on visits to Kaye distributors in most of the Far Eastern countries and culminated with the showing of the Kaye Company equipment in the Bally booth at the Japan trade show.

One of the highlights of the tour was a visit with American Pool Leisure Centers, the new Kaye distributor in Hong Kong. Their approach to pool halls, interestingly enough, is similar to the current domestic trend of highly decorative centers catering to the white collar segment of the population, Bill Currier, sales manager, reports.

ATE set for Jan. 29-31

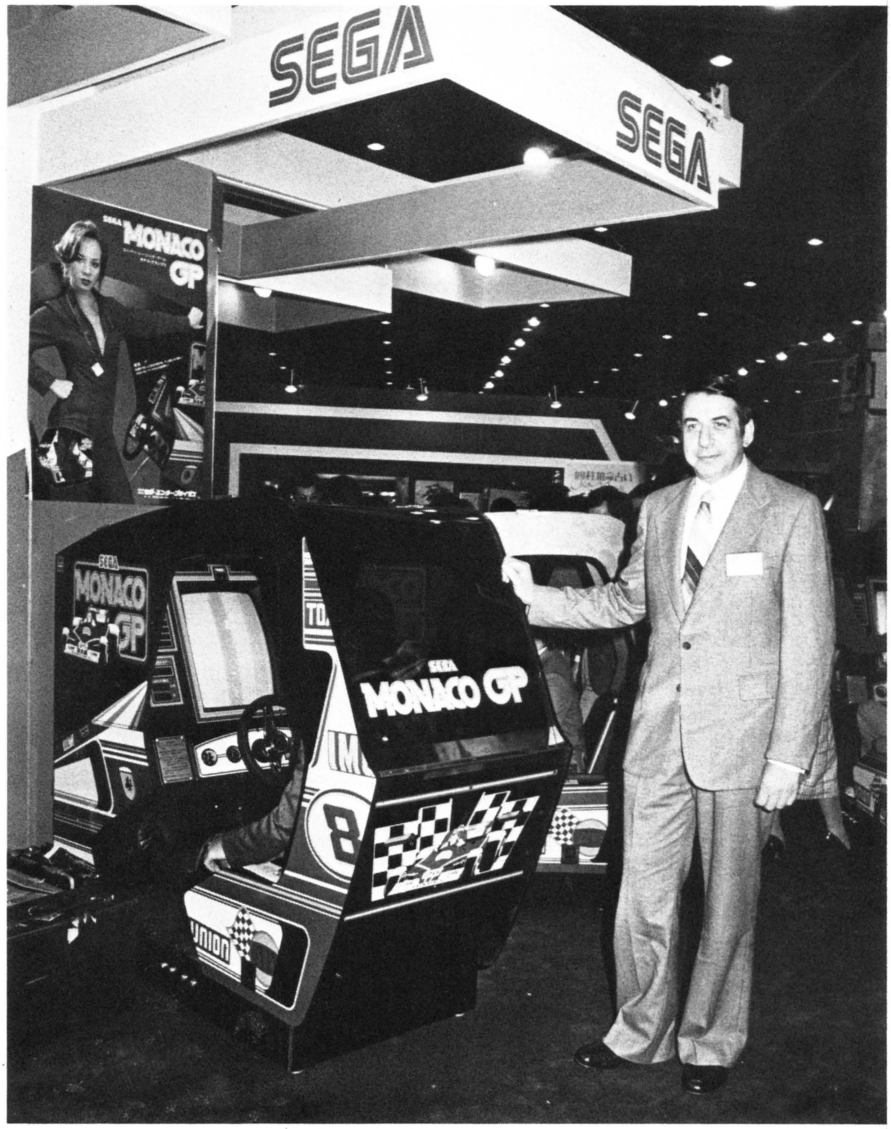
Exhibitors from many parts of the world will show a complete range of amusement trade equipment, from coin-operated machines to kiddie rides, at the 36th annual Amusement Trades Exhibition to be held at Alexandra Palace, London, January 29-31, 1980.

So far 147 exhibitors have booked space. Among those from the United States are Ardac Inc., of Willoughby, Ohio; R.H. Belam, New York; and The Eyerly Aircraft Co., Salem, Oregon. Exhibition space will cover 40,000 square feet.

Show attendance usually averages 6,000 to 8,000; many come from overseas. Overseas visitors who register beforehand are entitled to a reduced entrance fee. Registration should be made by the first week of January 1980 at the latest.

A shuttle coach service will run during the Show from Wood Green Underground station to Alexandra Palace.

For further information and registration contact the organizer: Amusement Trades Exhibitions Ltd., 122 Clapham Common, North Side, London SW4 England. Telephone: 01 228 4107.



Sega Chairman of the Board David Rosen stands beside the most requested Sega game of the J.A.A. show, Monaco.

Japan show-goers enjoy Monaco

Despite monsoon weather conditions, the 17th annual Japan Amusement Association Amusement Machine Show held recently in Tokyo attracted a record number of 30,000 people from 18 different countries.

Manufacturers, distributors, and operators were able to view the latest in coin-operated machines. One U.S. manufacturer attending was Sega Enterprises Incorporated, along with its subsidiary, Gremlin Industries, Inc.

Occupying two floors in the International Trade Center, there were 1,200 different games displayed and demonstrated. One Gremlin game that show-goers enjoyed was *Monaco GP*, a behind-the-wheel driving game incorporating "Multi-Phase" challenges.

Sega Enterprises Inc. Chairman of the Board David Rosen and Gremlin President Frank Fogelman attended the four day fair in Tokyo. *Monaco*, they reported, was the game which most distributors and operators requested.

Sega hosted a reception welcoming the many foreign dignitaries in attendance. Taking place in the Shiratama Room of the Pacific Hotel located in downtown Tokyo, invited guests included hundreds of Japanese operators and several groups of foreign sales representatives. These individuals represent the opinions of operators and players in arcades and street locations throughout the world and are all part of the Sega distributor network.

Both Rosen and Fogleman point out that the cosmopolitan attention of the J.A.A. show indicates the growing acceptance of coin operated games world-wide.

XCOR charges inaccuracy

Xcor International, Inc. responded recently to charges made by an analyst of Bache, Halsey, Stuart, Shields, Inc. in an article appearing in the November 7 edition of the *New York Post*.

These charges related to the performance and marketability of the slot machines manufactured by Xcor's Williams Electronics subsidiary (sold under the name, "Seeburg") and to Xcor's purported motivation in commencing an antitrust suit in New Jersey against Bally Manufacturing Corporation, a rival manufacturer of slot machines.

James J. Hughes, president of Xcor, said that the charges are inaccurate. The quality and reliability of the current Seeburg line of slot machines has become well recognized, and is evidenced by the fact that casino operators now utilizing Seeburg machines are satisfied with their performance.

He attributed the fact that the market share of Seeburg machines is low to anti-competitive practices of Bally, which is the subject, incidentally, of antitrust suits brought by Williams recently in both the federal and New Jersey courts. He noted also that a federal grand jury has been sitting in Chicago to investigate the antitrust aspects of the slot machine industry.

German exhibit booked

Heckmann GMBH of Wiesbaden, the German Coin Machines Industry's fair management firm, reports that the exhibition is fully booked.

Slated for January 17-19, 1980, at the Frankfort fairground's exhibition hall one, 93 international manufacturers will present a market review of coin-operated amusement and vending machines.

The gross reserved area is approximately 10,000 square meters with exhibitions hailing from the U.S., Japan, Italy, Great Britain, Switzerland, and other countries.

Only specialist visitors will be allowed access to the fair, invited by means of personal invitations, worldwide advertising and direct-mailing.

Nostalgia will be well-represented by a coin-operated machine museum, put together specially for the trade fair through the initiative of several firms. Some of the delightful "old-timers" will include *One-arm Bandits*, *Bajazzo*, *Penny Balancer*, and music boxes.

Everyone seemed pleased with Bally's new Dolly Parton flipper during a recent photography session in Charlotte, North Carolina, particularly Dolly herself. From left to right are Don Warden, Dolly Parton's road manager; Carol Mart Porth, advertising manager, Bally Manufacturing Corporation; Jon Brady, Brady Distributing Company in Charlotte, and Dolly Parton.

Seeburg's Adair Jr. retires

William F. Adair, Jr. of The Seeburg Corporation announced his retirement as president of the firm during a Seeburg distributor meeting he was conducting recently in Chicago.

Adair has been a Seeburg veteran for over 17 years spending much of this time in the areas of sales and marketing. He has been responsible for many of the coin phonograph innovations that are considered standard in the industry today, company officials report.

"We at Seeburg, in the past years, have pioneered dramatic concepts in cabinetry, design and graphics. All superb Seeburg contributions to the coin music industry which I am proud to have been a part," Adair noted.

He also played a major role in spearheading the company's program for the development of Seeburg's Microlog circuitry concept and was involved with Seeburg's microcomputer technology.

Although in good health and fully recovered from cardiovascular surgery early in 1979, Adair stated that he felt he wanted to curtail his business activities a bit to "pursue a less demanding lifestyle."

"I will," he continued, "maintain my association with Seeburg in a consultant capacity and will still keep my finger in the pie, so to speak, regarding new product design and planning."

Prior to his joining the Seeburg family, Adair had been associated in the management of several distribution outlets in the east which specialized in Seeburg products. He joined Seeburg as a vice president and later became president of The Seeburg Sales Corporation, then president of the firm.

Nancy Goodwin, Seeburg sales, summed up the feelings of the convention audience when she announced, "We have been batting ideas around for a month as to what we could give Bill to express our feelings of love and appreciation for his many years of service to Seeburg. Everybody said, whatever you do, do not give him a watch...that's too traditional.

"Well, we thought and thought. What do you give to a man who has financial success, a beautiful wife and home life, and all the accoutrements that accompany modern day living?

"We finally decided there was a reason the presentation of a watch is traditional. What else can you give a man that he will look at hourly and daily that will express to him your abiding gratitude, appreciation and affection?

"I've had a love affair with the coin machine industry and the people in it for a good many years," Adair commented.

John T. Chapin, a seasoned Seeburg veteran of 33 years, has been named to the Seeburg presidency.

Rowe racks up record earnings

By Ralph C. Lally II

Pheasant Run Resort in St. Charles, Illinois, was the site of the recent Rowe International distributor's meeting, with participants hailing from all over the United States, Canada, and abroad.

The Whippany, New Jersey, firm centered the annual event around the theme "Progress and Expectations." The meeting, which was said to have marked a turning point for Rowe, was designed to detail Rowe past and present accomplishments, as well as provide a glimpse at Rowe future plans.

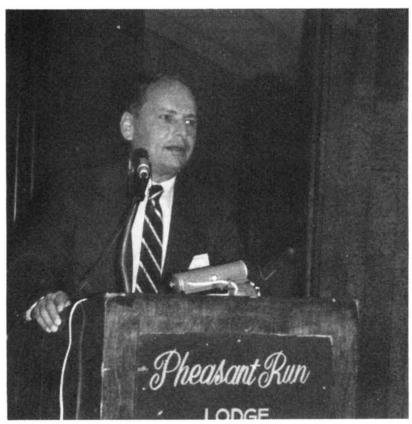
Ed Wiler, vice president of sales for Rowe, reported in his opening remarks that, despite some rather unfavorable conditions in the phonograph and vending markets, Rowe experienced a favorable increase in sales. The man who deserved the credit, he noted, was Rowe President Merrill Krakauer.

Krakauer confirmed that sales in 1979 hit new highs and reminded the audience of last year's records in net profit and return on investment. And even greater heights will be reached, he promised.

In declining to accept all the credit for Rowe's success, the dignified industry veteran complimented his management and marketing staff. "Success," he said, "relates to projecting into the future needs of the marketplace. Management stability has helped all this come about."

This year's prosperity is due to several achievements, Krakauer reported. Heading the list was an increase of 61 percent in sales to national accounts. Sales by independent distributor organizations were up to 28 percent over last year and sales of bill changers also hit new levels. And Rowe's strengthened marketing organization, the executive reminded, also was responsible for the company's increased revenue.

"Our engineering goal is to develop new, attractive products through research and development programs that have shown favorable results in the most productive areas," Krakauer said in closing. "Our manufacturing goal is to produce efficient and reliable products while providing satisfactory gross profit levels. And our marketing goal, of course, is to maximize sales by increasing our market share."



Merrill Krakauer

Matt Ross

Ed Lloyd, field service manager for Rowe, prefaced his introduction of the new products by emphasizing the need for a "startling new phonograph." He pointed out various unique features of their current phonographs, such as 200 selection capacity, auto play, the Memorec popularity computer, a 125 watt RMS power output, and Rowe's five year warranty program.

But the improved features in the R-84 series were the real news, Lloyd asserted. He noted the elimination of the four PC boards that controlled the memory, credit, Memorec, and a selector logic functions. "A newly designed central control computer was designed to take the place of these four PC boards and provide some new features as well," Lloyd said. "With a push of a button, a read-out tells how much money the phonograph has made during a certain period. The new system can also display the number of times each selection, 'A' side or 'B' side, has been played."

A new money meter has become standard equipment on the R-84 series, he added, as well as a control computer which "makes changing price a simple and convenient matter."

However, the innovations don't stop there. The R-84 also features a "most popular record display" which shows the current number one song on the phonograph at any given time. And there also is a "popular record button" that can be pushed to play the most popular songs in descending order.

Exterior changes are there all right but what about the inside? The internal record mechanism, which is now belt-driven has been reduced in size and now weighs six pounds lighter, the Rowe spokesman said. Three of the five switches have been eliminated and the time between plays has been reduced from ten seconds to six. Additionally, the encoder device has been eliminated and replaced with an optional electronic switch that actually counts the teeth in the gear of the mechanism.

Not surprisingly, interest was high when the distributors finally came face to face with the new Rowe phonographs. The new console phonograph called the *Kentwood* featured elegant functional styling, a 125 watt amplifier, an improved speaker system, and a new touch selector system. Three different styles of the R-84 series—the *Tempo*, the *Prelude*, and the *Tempo Disco*—also were unveiled.

The *Tempo* was described as the "lively version with a contemporary look that never gets old." And the *Prelude*—"a furniture version with a sophisticated and attractive look." The *Tempo Disco*, of course, with its flickering lights around the selection display and the word "disco" on its front, suggests an exciting sense of constant motion that seems to liven up to the spirited intentions of the manufacturer.

For more on the Rowe phonographs, check out the special Phono Buyers Guide section in this issue.

Typhoon fails to dim Japanese Exhibition enthusiasm

By David Snook

A typhoon which killed an estimated 40 people in Japan also brough the 17th Japanese Amusement Exhibition to a premature close on its opening day.

The ten-foot-high billboard mounted over the top of the exhibition hall in Tokyo's main exhibition center was smashed to matchwood by 100 m.p.h. gales. Windows also fell victim, blowing down trees citywide.

Stan Jarocki, left, and Henry Ross, center, from Midway are pictured with Bob Deith from Ruffler and Deith in London, around some Bally slots at the Tokyo Exhibition.

Freddie Bailey from Dublin tries out Sega's new Monaco GP *while, from left, Ken Chappelow, Eddie Moss, and Michael Green look on. Green represents Alca Electronics, the British distributors for Sega.*

It was the flood threat coupled with the high tide that eventually defeated the organizers. The local fire brigade ordered the close-down mid-way through the first afternoon after power cuts blacked out the equipment on show.

The thousands of visitors were left to search the deserted streets for taxis, often bowled over by the wind and paddling minus shoes and socks through lakes of rainwater.

It was a spectacular start to a spectacular show and actually didn't do that much harm, the organizers reported to PLAY METER. Noboru Yamamoto, managing director of the Japan Amusement Trade Association, sponsors of the show held from October 19-21, said that by the time the typhoon struck, most of the day's visitors were already inside the exhibition hall.

Those visitors seemed undeterred the following day as well, for they turned up in thousands in bright sunlight to visit the exhibits and by the time the doors closed on day three, 30,000 people were estimated to have toured the show.

A large number of site owners must be counted among that many people, for the Japanese trade numbers no more than about 4,000 operators. Of these operators, only a handful are actually members of the J.A.A. The total membership of just 175 seems woefully short, but it is long in "clout"—only the most successful companies can afford the membership dues and the vast majority of operators are not able to meet the financial obligations.

The influence of the Japanese manufacturing trade is, to say the least, meteoric. Few could have failed to notice at last year's A.M.O.A. the number of machines—particularly video games—built under license from their Japanese originators.

Yet, only a few years ago, the Japanese were scorned for "ripping off" so many ideas from Western countries. It appears that the Japanese coin machine business is rapidly following in the footsteps of that country's camera and car manu-

facturers.

The show, surprisingly, found itself elevated to the dizzy heights of A.T.E. or A.M.O.A. in world influence. With the Japanese now firmly entrenched on top of world markets as innovators—even if only in the field of video games—half the world wanted to be in Tokyo for the show.

The U.S. turned out in great numbers. I noticed Nolan Bushnell, Gary Stern, Ira Bettelman, Al Simon, Arnold Kaye, and Henry Ross among the American contingent. Others came from Spain, Italy, Belgium, and Australia.

But the largest contingent this year was the British. About 50 people came from London on a tour, and there were at least another dozen Britons there who, although unable to get on the tour, went under their own steam.

The reaction of the Japanese was, not surprisingly, one of delight. Organizers went out of their way to welcome the sudden influx of world coin machine notables. Sega even imported translators to help overcome the language difficulties, not only on their own products, but surprisingly, on anything that the visitors wanted to look at.

One of the organizers well understood the reasons for the foreign interest when he said: "We are aware of the success overseas of such games as *Space Invaders*. The Japanese industry has a great opportunity here to put itself among the world leaders in all forms of coin-operated equipment. It is an opportunity that must not be missed."

Underlying everything, however, was the distinct impression that a long way in front of considerations for the overseas market is the need to come up with something for their prodigious home market.

For years the Japanese coin machine market was dominated by Pachinko, a kind of wall-mounted bagatelle game with gift prizes. The trade association, I felt, had an ambition to get away from this passion and indeed, one of the organizers told me that they regarded Pachinko and its thousands of parlors all over the country as something of a toy game.

In *Space Invaders* they found the real thing, which made the inventors, Taito, a household name overnight. The Japanese do nothing half-way, of course, and when they fall for something they do so with one big unified crash.

And that explains why, for every Pachinko parlor in Tokyo, there is currently a couple of game rooms packed with *Space Invader* games. Just about every manufacturer in the country seems to have ripped it off or brought out its own version.

This copying is something which causes the J.A.A. great concern but the passion for the game has overcome all other considerations. There's a mass euphoria at work here for shooting down alien spaceships to the accompanying rhythmic thud of the sound effects.

The populous Japanese have fallen for video games through *Space Invaders* and now they seem to be neatly hooked on the whole principle of coin machines. Manufacturers, of course, are on the lookout for new games to take the place of the "standard."

The show was packed with the cocktail tables that are so popular in Japan. The variations on the game were bewildering. A whole new industry has grown up as smaller companies have mushroomed to feed the insatiable appetite of the Japanese public.

There are now, by my reckoning, an estimated 300,000 *Space Invaders* games on sites all over Japan, with a world total of 500,000. It has taken just two years to create the situation, but whether the Japanese manufacturers can hold on to that huge domestic market depends very much on what's on their drawing boards for the future.

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The curious went to Tokyo, but they found mostly 'Space Invaders'

By David Snook

So what was new in Tokyo? What had the Japanese manufacturers come up with to keep the immense ball of *Space Invaders* rolling and the yen rattling into the cash box?

Very broadly, it was a case of much-the-same-but-better. A quick conclusion was that there were far more cocktail tables than anything else, although the games were not that different, but the trade in Japan had done much to polish them up.

Those in the know suggested this was because the love affair with *Space Invaders* and its variations has another year to run before the Japanese public becomes tired of it.

Fighting through the knee-high (for Westerners, anyway) cocktail tables we found some notable videos in upright cabinets that should make their mark in the West. Above all, we found that the expected change-over to color monitors has arrived—at least in Japan.

Taito weighed in with *Space Invaders II*, which to me is really just an updated Part I, with a faster game, a few extra incentives in the game itself and better effects. More notable from Taito was *Space Chaser*, an excellent *Head On*-type game using rocket ships—occasionally as many as four pursuers, if you are good enough to get them into the game.

Nintendo came up with *Sheriff*, a brighter version of the well-known favorite, *Boot Hill*, with a central cowboy figure trying to wipe out attacking bandits encircling him before he is himself hit.

Kasco had a major gun game on show called *Caribbean Pirates*, which had a moving scenario of pirates remarkably reminiscent of the Walt Disney creation Pirates of the Caribbean at Disneyland.

Namco came up with *Galaxian*, a space battle video game sufficiently different from *Space Invaders* to stand or fall on its own virtues, but with ideas good enough to prove a winner. The same company showed *Zero In*, a cockpit air battle game with some brilliant effects.

Sega came up with *Head On Two* with a different track with some maze features and increasing numbers of pursuers as the skill of the player improves.

For me, however, the star of the show was Sega's *Monaco G.P.*, an arcade driving game of enormous appeal. Built on the cabin principle, *Monaco* uses T.T.L. logic on a wide-scan color monitor especially built for the job. The player's car drives up a rolling track that constantly widens and narrows, dodging or overtaking over cars through skid patches and even in darkness, using headlights to see his way.

The game's sound effects are excellent, the graphics brilliant and the game is very sensitive to the control of the player. By the time this report hits the PLAY METER pages, A.M.O.A. will have come and gone, but I'm prepared to wager that *Monaco G.P.* is one of the successes of Chicago, too.

Of the imported equipment on show, Atari's *Lunar Lander* was probably the most popular, building on the success the new game has already achieved in world markets. Atari's Frank Ballouz, who was at the show, reported: "There seems to have been a resurgence of baseball, basketball, and football games, which pleases me. We decided some time ago that everything at A.M.O.A. this year is going to be on color monitors which seems to bear out our thinking. Players want something more attractive than black and white, with greater visual effect which is why we are using our quadrascan techniques."

Henry Ross of Midway said: "I am tremendously impressed by the Japanese manufacturers. There are many differences in the product line since my last visit here many years ago."

Of other types of coin machines, its general absence tended to reflect the degree of popularity in Japan to which they aspired. There were a scattering of pool tables, a few slots on slugs-in-slugs-out, a few pin tables, all U.S.-built, and I only found one jukebox.

In the case of phonographs, the reason was undoubtedly the rise in popularity of what the Japanese call Karaoke players, which are coin-operated tape machines and provide music without lyrics. The Japanese in local pubs, interestingly enough, prefer to singalong rather than listen.

As for the other types of machines which have failed to find a big market, one big reason for the failure seems to be the continuing Japanese love affair with the *Space Invader*. If the romance goes out of that marriage within the next year, however, Japanese manufacturers will be reeling from mountain-sized headaches. It's a hard act to follow and there don't seem to be any contenders in the wings.

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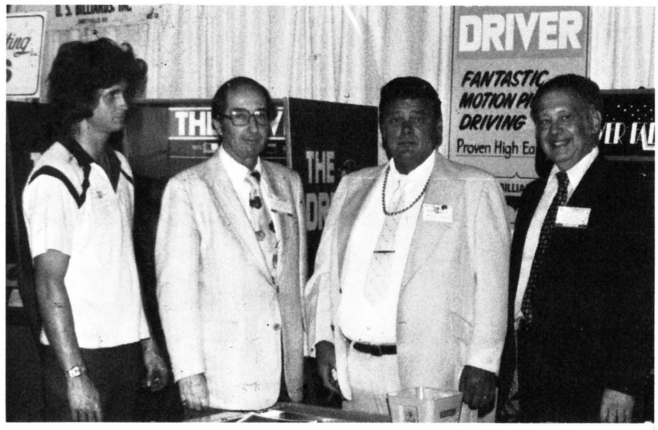

Len Schneller, second from left, and Stan Levine, far right, show off their U.S. Billiards products to two unidentified Parks show-goers.

The Worst Best Show Ever

"It was the best Parks Show. It was the worst of Parks Shows." It seemed many who went to the International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions (IAAPA) annual exhibition in New Orleans November 17-19 could describe the event in the superlative degree of comparison only.

The Parks Show, as it is commonly referred to, is designed primarily for the carnival and fair industry as well as amusement park operators. And coin-operated amusement machines have been playing an increasing role in this related industry. That being the case, the Parks Show has been drawing a substantial number of exhibitors from the amusement machine industry.

Between the Bally Group display and the Rowe booth, virtually every major new piece that was shown at the prior week's AMOA Show was on display again. In addition to these two large distributor exhibits, nineteen other manufactures exhibited at this show—the most notable being Gremlin, Ramtek (now Rainbow Games), Sircoma, U.S. Billiards, and Williams.

Despite the rather strong contingent of coin-op exhibitors, the show was virtually dominated by the many facets of the "carnie" trade. Booths promoting gifts, prizes, and novelties abounded. The most popular booths seemed to be those that represented the various concessions sold at amusement parks. Soft drinks, popcorn, cotton candy, and the like were all being handed out as free samples.

When asked if the show was successful or not, half of these exhibitors said it was the best ever. The other half reported that it was, by far, the worst ever. Those who complained pointed to the change in the show's format. In prior years the Parks Show had always been held on Friday through Sunday. This year the show ran Saturday through Monday.

"Monday is the first day of the work week," one exhibitor remarked, "It is, to many, the most important day of the work week. It, therefore, has to be the worst day of the week to hold a show."

While attendance at the exhibition was rather sparse on Monday, most of the coin-op people were not crying sour grapes. Most of the coin-op sector enjoyed a very favorable show and were not too upset with the lackluster last day, but still it remains to be seen what format the show will take next year.

—By Ralph C. Lally II

Midway's Larry Berke and Andy Ducay pose with the new Space Invaders deluxe *at the Bally Group booth.*

Gremlin's Jack Gordon and Len DeGroot beam at the enthusiasm Monaco GP *generated.*

The London Previews:

Whew! Six shows in two days time

The guy who pays the piper doesn't necessarily call the tune—at least in Great Britain. The big end-of-season jaunt to the bright lights of London is an annual October event for the British coin machine operator but this year he ended up with sore feet.

The first week in October always sees the previews—that is, mini-exhibitions of coin machines sponsored by individual distributors to entertain customers and entice them to buy a few machines to fill in that awful manufacturing down-time between the end of the seaside arcade business and the spending spree at A.T.E.

The theory is fine and worked happily in the years that the Alfred Crompton Group ran it as a solo event. Crompton makes arcade games, the "penny pushers" that are so popular in British seaside arcades and America. To boost the numbers of visitors other coin machine companies were invited to join and share costs.

Gradually, however, other previews started to open up at the same time in other hotels in London. With trade currently buoyant in the U.K., therefore, it really wasn't a surprise to find no fewer than six previews being held on October 3 and 4—all of them in separate hotels.

As the announcement of each preview was made through the early part of this year, so the groans of the operators became more profound.

They were left with the perplexing choice of going to one preview and possibly missing something elsewhere, or going to them all and counting the cost in blisters.

This year five of the previews were fairly close together, costing little more than shoe leather and time, but what really threw things was the ambitious move by one of Britain's largest coin machine companies, Associated Leisure. The company decided to take its preview out to Hammersmith, to the Cunard International Hotel, tapping a total of fifteen companies to utilize the 18,000 sqaure feet of exhibition space.

Hammersmith, of course, is a suburb of London—a long taxi ride away from the rest of the action. But it paid off, for a total of 1,200 operators registered at the door and A.L. had a big success on its hands.

Not that the other previews didn't succeed too. That was half the problem. Previews are popular and this year everyone bought new equipment, so the manufacturers and distributors who took part—around 35 in total—will undoubtedly regard previews as a necessity for next year's marketing program.

But they did not endear themselves to the operators who had the struggle around the city to take everything in and a great deal of criticism resulted.

Some alleged it would be better if all previews went under one roof. The Cunard International, in fact, has another 14,000 square feet of space which was unoccupied during the previews. The problem, probably, is that competition is so fierce between distributors that everyone is too frightened to share the same building with their opposition.

The upshot of the situation is bound to be at least six and possibly more previews next year and another two days of aggravation and frustration for the visitors.

With so much of the British trade tied up in slots, the appeal of the equipment on show to U.S. visitors would have been somewhat limited.

At the A.L. Preview, a big feature was made of the pinball range, with the top models Bally's *Paragon* and *Kiss* and Zaccaria's *Hot Wheels* coming out on top. A.L. Sales Director Alan Wilson noted: "The current crop of pinball machines on the market is without a doubt the best I have seen at any one time in the 15 years that I have been in the industry."

Midway's *Phantom II* also proved a big success, while over in the Cherry Leisure display, the British distributors for Atari were most enthusiastic about *Lunar Lander*, which was receiving its European debut, and *Soccer*, which left many visitors exhausted.

Over from the States, incidentally, was a trio of notables from Atari—Frank Ballouz, Sue Elliott, and Gil Williams.

Eight companies joined Crompton at its traditional show where the sponsors had a big range of arcade island-type machines on show, mostly with payouts. London Coin featured Rock-Ola's new *Max* phonograph and also featured the Atari *Lunar Lander* and *Soccer*.

The Music Hire Group at its preview placed a strong emphasis on the Rowe phonographs, Williams' new *Tri-Zone* pinball and Gottlieb's

Totem and *Genie*.

Remo Leisure, a British company manufacturing coin-operated racing car controlled around large tracks for amusement parks and large arcades, had its show in another hotel.

The Ruffler and Deith preview found U.S. Billiards' *Driver* a popular piece as well as the Italian game, *Rally Race* by Model Racing. Wurlitzer's new *Atlanta* phonograph was also shown for the first time. The box come in two forms, incidentally, the *Atlanta 5* with 200 selections and *Atlanta 4* with 160 selections. Vectorbeam's *Barrier* was also on display.

Then there was the Electrocoin-C.T. Leisure combined display at a hotel over the road from Ruffler and Deith's show. This seemed a good send off for the new *Cosmic Invaders* from Universal of Japan for whom Electrocoin are distributors.

The problem for the visitors was getting around to all of the exhibits. Perhaps it is time someone pointed out to the various sponsors that looking after their visitors once through the door is one thing, but getting them to arrive at the door is another.

Spreading themselves around the town for no better reason than commercial jealousy probably is going to mean only one thing: the operators won't go to all the previews. Logically, then, one roof means everyone gets a bigger crack of the whip. It just seems that there doesn't seem to be that much logic flying around in London in October these days...

Atari's Soccer proved a popular newcomer at the Associated Leisure Preview in London on October 3 and 4. Pictured with the game are M. Jean Jacques Gaillard, a director of Socodimex of France, Frank Ballouz, Atari marketing director, Sue Elliott, international sales manager, M. Serge Liebon, a director of Socodimex and Gil Williams also from Atari.

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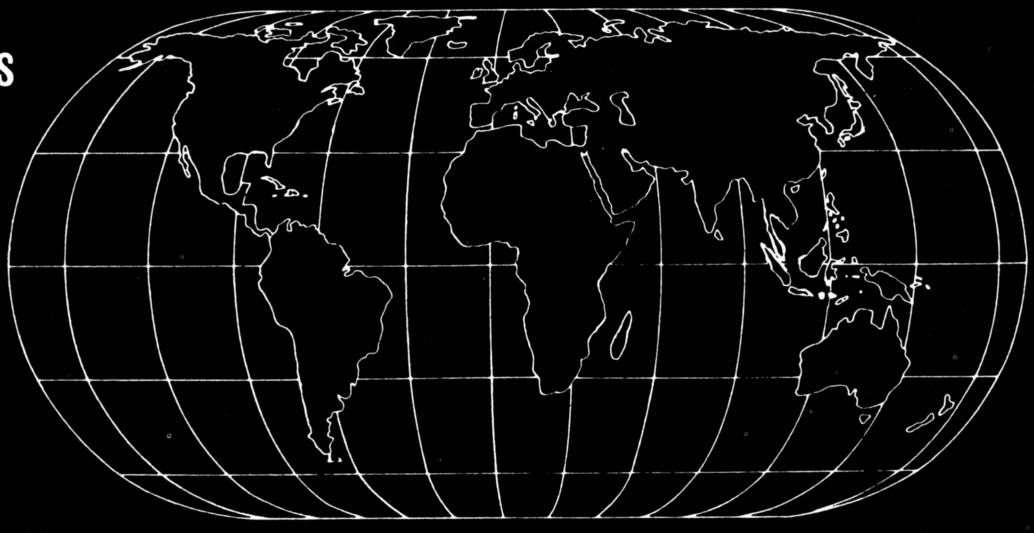

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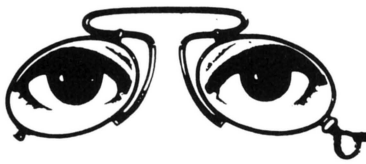

Critic's Corner

By Roger C. Sharpe

Getting tough

You wait all year for it to happen and suddenly, it's over almost before it begins—definitely before you've had a chance to do all that you wanted to do, anyway. This was my sixth AMOA and maybe in retrospect, the most disappointing of the previous five. Time didn't allow to see all the people I would liked to have seen and for that I'm sorry since it's only once a year I can get together with the friends I have made in the industry over the past few years.

Beyond that were the faces I had come to look forward to seeing, such as Herb Jones, and even Bill Gersh, who, unfortunately, weren't present at the '79 edition of the convention.

And then, of course, there was the equipment, and for me, the pinball machines that were and weren't there.

I was surprised, to say the least, by the absence of what I was really looking forward to—the foreign manufacturers. You know, those games that you might only see once and never again.

By Saturday it became obvious that the selections weren't available to try out and get to know. No Recel, Interflip, Zaccaria, or any or the others that always seem to surface in time for the Chicago show. These, and other companies, such as the short-lived Astro Games, always seemed to make the show just a little bit more of a time for discovery. And the end of a decade, I had feelings of regret—of how things used to be rather than how they've become.

From over two dozen models on the floor last year, the number now diminished to less than twenty, which quantitatively might not seem like a lot, but it is worlds apart from previous years.

So, I played video this year. Not bad, but how many variations can you take of *Space Invaders* or *Head On*?

The magic of exploring new things and innovative equipment was missing at this AMOA show, with the only constant being that, by and large, most people I talked with felt that I had become too lenient in my reviews of games.

Too many ####'s, they complained. When was I going to get serious about panning some of the machines that were coming down the pike? Not every machine is a winner, they reminded, and that maybe, just maybe, I had become too soft—not objective enough to let people really have it, if the games weren't up to snuff.

I suppose much of that is true, at least in part, and maybe I have been a little too nice in some of my reviews.

I've decided to mend my ways, folks, since it is only the feedback I get from all of you that makes this column worthwhile. If there's something I should be doing and I'm not, I always try to be sensitive enough to alter the ways things were.

And so it is with the coming of a new decade a change will take place in this space. The reviews are going to become a helluva lot tougher and reasons are going to be given and outlined as to why a game is getting the review and rating it will have. No punches will be pulled and more outside comments are going to be added to further substantiate the rating of any given game.

The breakdown as to the ratings are as follows:

= excellent game
= good game
= fair game
= bad game

What does all this mean? Well, as I've said from the very beginning, the ratings are not manufacturer against manufacturer or even game versus game from different companies, but rather an indication of how one company is doing in terms of aesthetics, playability, and appeal.

And, as usual, (I'm the first to admit it) that it's what the cashbox holds that ultimately determines a winning game. For example, for every location where *Flash* was *the* dynamite piece, there are other places where maybe a *Hot Tip* turned big earnings.

So are the ratings really valid at all? I think they are as an indication of the superficial aspects of any given machine but the burden still rests with you the operator.

The aim of this column isn't to take away your freedom of choice or even to pre-determine what equipment you should or shouldn't buy, but rather to get you thinking more seriously about individual machines and whether they will be a valuable addition to your location. That's what it's all about, pure and simple.

Since the feedback has been such that maybe the reviews aren't giving you enough, I'm going to become even more critical of the games. To begin with, in this last issue of the '70s, I'd like to give an overview of the equipment on the floor of the show in the way of pins, where I feel the companies now stand in relation

Roger's Ratings At-A-Glance

Bally's DOLLY PARTON..... ## **Universal's ASTEROID KILLER**..... #½

to each other and as compared to their relative status of technological evolution.

As I mentioned earlier, my reaction to the show was one of disappointment. I expected more, was surprised by some things, and feel basically that much of the industry is standing still trying to understand and better utilize a technology that has been in existence for only a few short years. Still, I had expected things to happen quicker than they have and to have companies act rather than *react* to particular changes in what the competition is doing.

So, alphabetically, let's take a look at where the pinball producers stand, in the area of conventional pins since I tend to discount the impact these days of the sit-down market. The lack of the numbers of these types of machines as compared to a year ago bear me out, I think.

Bally

Here is a company that really started it all in a big way. After being down for much of the post-war years, the strides this company made in a relatively short period of time are remarkable, to say the least.

But recent vintage machines have left little to the imagination. Rather than continuing the innovations begun with *Eight-Ball*, Bally has tended to play it close to the vest in turning out rather uninspired equipment that has evolved laterally.

The games have been good, strong pieces, for the most part, and the total package has improved over time, but this giant has become more of the leader resting on its laurels than hungry battler daring to be different and imaginative. It is a posture, incidentally, which I think is reminiscent of Gottlieb in the late '50s and '60s.

But with the beginning of the new decade, change must occur, and Bally will undoubtedly feel the pressure to respond in a favorable light that can only benefit the industry as a whole and the company in particular. The risk taking will have to replace the complacency of rearranging standard features on a playfield and masking them in artwork which, admittedly, still has no peer in terms of realism and graphic authenticity.

Game Plan

With only one game under its belt, the test of time has not been weathered as to what this company can do over the long haul. Incredible strides were made with its first effort in terms of utilizing memory on a full function basis, as well as the integration of a sound system that thematically tied in the total game. Even the layout of the game was a departure from the standard format. But I'm going to have to adopt a wait and see attitude until the "new kid on the block" unveils its next three or four machines.

Gottlieb

The standard bearer has lagged behind in many ways in the development of its solid state efforts. The king of the single-player machine has been a profound disappointment by not integrating memory into its games, which is important to get that continuity of play from one ball to the next. In fact, except for some ball carry overs on a game such as *Hulk*, the electronic factor has remained fairly dormant.

Characteristically, the components of Gottlieb games over the years (roto-spins, vari-targets, and even drop targets) have been adapted to solid state but the breakthrough game has yet to occur.

Stern

The "David" in a field of "Goliaths" has held its own remarkably well in the battle of pinball supremacy. Once counted out as a heavy in the industry, recent efforts have shown a willingness to be innovative and daring, with the major emphasis on the utilization of memory drop target banks.

Mechanical reliability remains the only major stumbling block, but Stern offers a viable, if not worthy, contestant in the solid state sweepstakes. In its typically methodical fashion, it has garnered a decent market share based on sound machines and technological breakthroughs which will insure its position in the coming decade.

Williams

An overnight sensation and success story brought about by the willingness and ability to change and adapt to a more sophisticated audience, Williams has found its place in the sun. Similar to the rise of Bally some years back, this company is riding the crest of a streak that shows no letting down. Its games are constantly evolving in the areas of design and graphic treatments as well as sound. Its sound, particularly, probably surpasses its competition at this point in time.

And, not content to rest on their laurels, Williams remains the hot one that everyone watches to see where pinball will next be going.

What's Up Next, Doc

What's the forecast for the coming decade? Change and refinement of the technology, along with a better understanding of how to harness the wonders of electronics. Taking its place next to the kick-out hole, bumper, flipper, and spinner in the landmarks of pinball achievement will be further use of memory and recall. Mechanically, I think the tapping of memorized drop targets will be used far and away from what Stern has so far used.

Only the surface has been scratched in terms of design and what is possible on the pinball playfield. Some of the machines at the show, which in the coming months will find their way out to locations around the world, are really only stop-gap measures.

Of course, brief rest periods in the growth of the science of pinball engineering are not unknown. The names *Roller Disco, Buck Rogers, Hulk, Genie, Coney Island, Sharpshooter, Galaxy, Meteor, Big Game, Dolly Parton, Harlem Globetrotters, Future Spa, Kiss, Stellar Wars, Gorgar, Laser Ball, Antar*, and all the rest are only fleeting glimpses of what is to come. My vision is one of a different breed of pinball where the imagined is possible and the unbelievable is reality.

But where do we go from here? Back to today, undoubtedly. The convention has passed and with it the opportunity to renew old friendships and gaze into the crystal ball. It is the end of a decade of change where pinball found itself thrust into the limelight by publicity generated from movies, books, celebrity games, home market sales, and a new technology better suited to today's player.

Gone are the single-player and two-player machines, bells and chimes and drum scoring units. An era has silently faded making many people feel out of step in this generation of the "new" pinball player. Even the bicentennial has passed us—pinball, believe it or not, is entering into its fifth decade.

If any tribute were to be awarded, it certainly belongs to the memory of the greats, such as David Gottlieb, Ray Moloney, Parker, Zale, Durant, Peo, Berman, and others, as well as a host of companies all too fleeting in their passing.

I sense a new vitality and lust for life that has transfused this industry. Much remains to be conquered. Legal battles must be fought and won old hatreds must be cast aside, forgotten along with the ageless and demoralizing image problems that have plagued this industry since its inception. Maybe the new decade will spawn a new sensibility. Only time will tell but I, for one, plan to stick around and see what happens.

Enough soapbox philosophizing. Let's move on to a couple of games and a new reviewing and rating system that is probably going to get me in even more hot water than I care to think about. But what the hell.

Let me know what you think—whether you like the new format, or don't, there's always something else to do. I could turn my attention to video games, perish the thought.

Bally's DOLLY PARTON

Here it is, the ultimate bosom-buddy pinball machine from those wonderful folks who made celebrity pinball chic.

PLAYFIELD: A top kick-out hole begins the action flanked on the left side by a bank of five stationary targets (D-O-L-L-Y) and a long kicking rubber on the right. At center are three thumper bumpers before one moves down and over to the right side in-line targets controlling 2X, 3X, 5X extra ball, special and 20,000 points. Also at the right is a spinner for access back to the top while on the left at mid-field near another Dolly Parton graphic is a target. For balance, the right side offers a short wire lane and access back down to the plunger lane, with a conventional wire lane and flipper set-up finishing off the action on the board.

ANALYSIS: The game is basically very simple: hit the left side targets to spell out D-O-L-L-Y and land in the top kick-out hole or hit the in-line targets to spell out P-A-R-T-O-N. Do it once and there's 22,000 points in the bank for a carry-over bonus; do it twice and it's 44,000 points in the bank; and the third time it merits a special.

The in-lane targets serve a dual function—they activate a bonus multiplier (which can be retained in the memory program) and also spot a letter each time you get a target down. And that's really the scoring on a machine that doesn't offer too much in the way of unique shots or layout.

From the right flipper, it's a try for a sweep up the left side or a reverse to the in-line targets, while the left side flipper has more mobility with a spinner, short return lane back to the plunger, in-line targets, or even a reverse back up that elongated left side. With a wide-open middle, except for some thumper bumpers, the average player is in for a tough fight and low scores, although holding over everything in the memory may lessen the pain of five digit scoring rather than the six digit totals we've all come to know and love.

GRAPHICS: I really feel for D.C. and the politics involved with dealing with a celebrity who had some different ideas than the gifted artist has to offer. The realism is striking, and like Johnny Carson said on one of his Tonight Shows, I would give a

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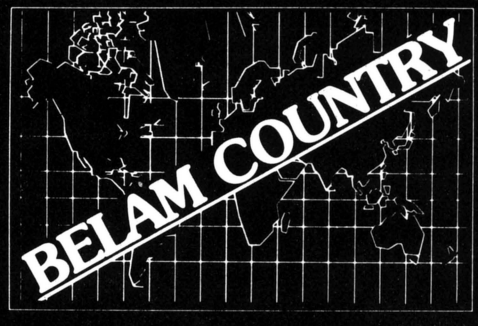

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year's salary to just have a peek inside. As for pinball, it does the job, although the imagination stretches to its farthest reaches in visualizing what might have been done given the right circumstances and situation. It's too bad but what the hell.

PLAY: Good luck. Depending upon how much you keep in the memory this machine may not totally turn your players on. Scores tend to be low without the bonus multiplier maintained, but with this done, the feature almost becomes wasted once the player has gotten up to five times bonus. The case really is one of a score under 100,000 points or over a million, with the chasm in between being far greater than anyone can hop. On three-ball play in extra ball areas, you might want to try 90,000 points to start and follow it with 200,000 and 360,000 points. For free-play, increase this by at least 100,000 points on each level depending upon the caliber of players in your location and how the machine is set up.

PROS & CONS: Besides the visual letdown, which was unavoidable, Dolly Parton is another link in the Bally chain of games. The basics are given on a field that doesn't utilize the best shot potentials from either flipper with a left side so dead it means death for even the best intended shots and a scoring build-up for out-hole bonus which just doesn't make it in this day and age.

But the biggest problem is a weak top with a lone kick-out hole and not much action from the bounce in this area until you get to a decent angle of a thumper bumper for some rebounding action. The movement away from the left side targets lacks any punch whatsoever, and the spinner access on the right side offers far too great an arc once through the spinner.

And at the bottom—best just to forget it. The action is dead, although one operator suggested just shortening the wire form of the lane would remedy the instant drains. As it stands now, it's awful hard to get any rebounding action when you're hitting against wood.

All in all, the in-line targets are a throw-away since they're the third game in a row to feature them. Change the housing or the side they're on and the problem isn't remedied. It's unfortunate that striking innovation has become an over-used bit of playfield design—it does have merit. Even *Voltan*, for pure shots, was a better pinball game and that suffered an untimely demise.

But as for Dolly who knows—in bars they're bound to love looking at her, and maybe even playing her, although it was one of the few times at a convention that I saw one machine constantly empty. Dolly, you may become a collectible backglass, but not much else.

RATING: ##

Universal's ASTEROID KILLER

From *Hercules* last year, this Japanese company offers a ray of sunshine in the foreign mainstream by being only one of two foreign manufacturers to show pins at the show.

PLAYFIELD: The action begins with four lanes (A-B-C-D) at the top along with a left side kick-back kicker that offers bonus values when lit. Move down and there's a three drop target bank at the left, three thumper bumpers in the middle and a right side roll-over button lane with a post and kick-back kicker set up.

A narrow left side four roll-over button lane offers access back to the top, while moving down a little lower than mid-field a roto-spin on the right side comes into play along with a left side three drop target bank.

The bottom features a two lane format to the flippers with the left side outer lane providing a slight opening for nudging a possible lost ball, or losing a possible saved ball.

ANALYSIS: The machine offers some interesting shots and play but the Japanese flipper still leaves something to be desired in terms of action and power. Even their responsiveness suffers when trying any of the long shots to the top of the playfield.

The layout is an intriguing one, with some nice balance from side to side, but once again, the flippers are everything, and if the power isn't there, then nothing really matters. There is a generous borrowing of Gottlieb's roto-spin and star target for some bonus multiplier possibilities.

Visually, the machine seems just plain smaller from the drop targets to a very, very narrow side lane on the left which makes getting back to the top a not too frequent happening. Small points that also bear mentioning are the kick-back kicker areas with their little resting place for the

Bally's DOLLY PARTON

ball (something Harry Williams liked when we made the tour of pinbll machines) and also the metal playfield with its plastic overlay.

GRAPHICS: *Asteroid Killer* doesn't sound like a kiddie game, does it?

You're right—it's a space-age knight doing battle against the giant beast (Rodan, where are you?) to protect the damsel in distress. The Japanese sense and use of color has definitely improved to the point where this machine is compatible with many of the domestic models (visually), and there's also been the introduction of an interesting twist.

Asteroid Killer is a six player machine and if you can't see the read-outs in the picture, just take a look at that black rectangle in the lower right of the backglass. If you weren't at the show or just don't remember it, that's the area where the scoring comes up. It's an interesting concept that frees much of the rest of the head for artwork, although I'm still fighting my traditional feelings about changing around any kind of readouts. And the extra ball or specials provide some distraction, which I'll get into later.

PLAY: The scoring is difficult, not because the points aren't on the board, but because the flippers just can't get you to the areas you want to go. With a different set of coils, who knows how special this game could be?

For extra ball areas on three-ball play, try a conventional breakdown of 90,000 for the first limit followed by 180,000 and 360,000 points. On replay, you can add another 75,000 to 100,000 points to each level.

PROS & CONS: The inherent problems with the flippers is really the downfall of *Asteroid Killer*, although the scoring is hard as well. Some good shots seem possible from either side although most of the action was close in with the bottom drop targets and roto-spin.

A larger problem is the lack of lateral play, which may be due more to the type of board rather than anything else—most of the rolls and rebounds are sluggish. In fact, I'd rather see this game in the home instead of location, since it would be a good piece for private play.

The scoring area also has been turned into a little video game area when there's an extra ball or special, since the people at Universal have also combined some interesting graphics with little dancing figures appearing on the miniature screen. This may be a great visual draw, but the slow-down for arcade play is unforgiveable, especially in this day and age of speed.

So for commercial play, the rating points fall like flies, but for a holiday piece of equipment for someone wanting to buy his own machine, this could be a game to keep someone frustrated for months, if not years to come.

RATING: #1/2

The Beginning of the End, I Promise

Some final comments are in order now that we've taken a look at two of the recent vintage machines. One of the most gratifying games at the show to see was the Stern wide-body, *Big Game*, which shows the direction, hopefully, of oversized pin games with its dimensionally sound approach to size and playfield layout. The circular motions and layouts of most wide-bodies, especially at the bottom part of the game, have really been a problem but now maybe the direction will change (we'll look at this in depth in an upcoming Critic's Corner).

Other games worth noting were the talking machines—*Gorgar* and the Bally *Kiss* mock-up. By the end of '80, I suppose, everyone is going to have at least one "talking" pin game.

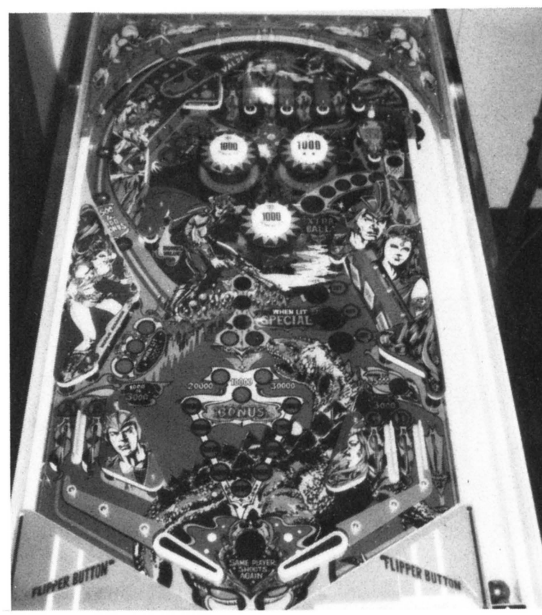
And of course, all the talk and rumors of the games coming up that weren't on the convention floor were intriguing. It all points to a new year that may indeed be a renaissance.

And with it, hopefully, this column will continue to adapt and change to meet the needs and demands of you the reader.

As far as the new "rating" system goes, I welcome any and all feedback. If there's anything else you'd like to see, just let me know. In the meantime, have some good holidays and a good end of the year.

By the time next month's PLAY METER is in your hands, there may be a new "sharpshooter" to keep an eye out for. Next column, God willing; I'll let you know if it's a girl or boy addition to the clan.

Until then, while I get back to my packing and breathing exercises, take care, be well and prosper...and many happy returns for the coming decade.



Universal's ASTEROID KILLER

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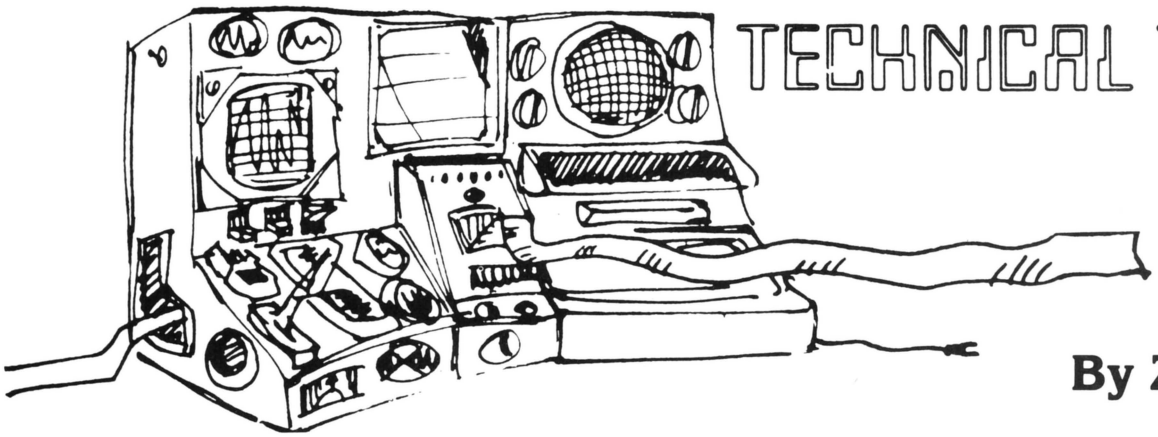


By Zac Oliver

A technical look at the AMOA

Some time ago when I wrote about the technological perspectives in the game industry, I mentioned that micro-processors were not yet fully employed in its possible applications. I also noted the growth of the market in the player level.

Actually, a combination of factors are responsible for this growth. There is little doubt that one of these factors was the creation of *Space Invaders*. Its unparalleled success was to be followed by further development of the game play—or at least re-editions of the original. Well, it wasn't a big surprise that the AMOA show this year displayed several games based on the *Space Invaders* concept.

Although some were excellent, I was disappointed in so many similarities, which probably decreased the individual interest in playing everyone of them. However, this lack of creativity does not apply to every model displayed at the show.

Behind the mundaneity of the game section, was the phonograph area. Electronics, of course, are a dominant part inside the cabinets. Rowe and Rock-Ola had major changes in control circuitry and features, with some variations from last year. The exterior control panels were greatly reduced and more easily accessible to the players, which reflects the introduction of new parts and upgrading in technology. There will be a greater dependency from the operator upon his distributor, balanced however, by the higher reliability of the systems. It is a whole new ball game for the "music mechanic"—a time to catch up.

Contrasting with its "neighborhood bar" coin-operated counterpart is the pool table. On all models displayed, simplicity and ruggedness were the stressed points. Entirely mechanic or electromechanic controls are already a byproduct of the industry electronic craze. One Irving Kaye model had a regular drop chute and I.C. controlled circuitry with motor driven tray and multiple pricing capability. Certainly multi-pricing is made easier and cheaper with the electronics, but does pricing vary that often on pool tables?

Billiards supplies were abundant in all display rooms. From cue sticks to chalk holders, the supply booths displayed a great variety of parts and products related to the industry.

Services and supplies to the coin machine industry related to games were not so abundant, with only a few companies displaying products at the show. Wico lead the list with its 1980 catalog, sure to catch the attention of visitors, especially those from foreign countries. Kimco from Mentor, Ohio, also stimulated interest with its very efficient desoldering station and conglomeration of tools for the electronic industry.

Particular attention was focused on a line of pliers by Electronic Production Equipment Corporation, displayed at the Kimco booth. Try one—you'll see what I mean. I hope to see more of this type of display on future conventions, since it gives the opportunity to visitors from around the world to contact suppliers of equipment and products not always available in their areas.

The new Amusement Operators Expo in New Orleans, to be held in March of 1980, is oriented mostly to the operation aspect of the coin machine industry, and should offer a large selection of products and services display booths.

The pinballs! Much of what could

It seems that the electronic circuitry gets more complex every year. Zac Oliver wonders if the mechanic or electromechanic controls haven't gotten out of hand when even pool tables have multiple pricing capability—have things gone too far?

Above, show participants cluster around one of many video games on display at the annual Chicago show. Below, suppliers turned out in great numbers, including Amusement Suppliers, Inc. of Dallas, Texas.

be seen at the show was the audio-visual aspect of the games, which is an area Roger Sharpe always covers very well. Playfield hardware offered little variation, most of it related to durability and reliability. Williams, with its fabled *Gorgar*, brought back the electromagnet under the playboard. It should clear once and for all the player suspicion of its use to draw the ball out of the playing area.

Lights and sounds will require more and new types of hardware. Seven and eight digits displays finally are being used and even CRT's took place of scoring systems in the back box of some European models.

Bally's *Kiss* was shown with a complete redesigned fiberglass cabinet. Some problems are foreseeable in the displayed model and since it was presented as a trial, I hope that the necessary perfectioning will come with location test, prior to manufacturing. But what is really important is the new approach taken. This may signal a new generation of games with a better cabinet, more adapted to today's moving requirements and player's use and, unfortunately, abuse.

Stern showed its *Big Game* with a wide body, narrower than its competitors. All its games looked very good. Stern produces reliable games; its only problem, as I see it, is the action mechanisms on the playfield do not hold their initial power. According to Sam Stern, these mechanisms are under revision and it is possible that some of the parts will be redesigned. The new self-test and bookkeeping introduced with *Meteor* has adapted and improved current fasions.

A few manufacturers allowed a look into the cabinets of their games. One of them was Viza Manufacturing. (Was that *Fascination*?) Its two cocktail table pinballs introduced several interesting approaches to the other design trends, one of which was the omission of rollover wires.

Light sensors placed inside strategic rubber mounting posts, using playfield illumination, will "sense" the ball presence as it interrupts the light beam.

The electronic hardware, microprocessors controlled, was quantitatively small, although the Viza models displayed were two player versions. Solenoid wire hardware was heavier and well proportioned. The dual solenoids used in the flipper units are transistor driven, eliminating the pesky mechanical problems the end-of-stroke switches presented.

Another interesting Viza feature was the possibility of adjusting the solenoids energizing time, thus allowing the change in ball speed. All solenoids are Wico's burn out proof coils which carry a heat sensitive element in series with the coil winding. The kicker assemblies, also from Wico, are very reliable. The importance of these innovations is relevant in that it is a dynamic creative process rather than in its immediate success.

The video and arcade equipment was presented mostly by the Far East. Leading the game concept innovation was Namco, Midway, Exidy, Atari, Taito, and a few others. The eastern influence could be seen in the cabinetry. Most cocktail table games used the same cabinet style. Many carry just one coin chute, often with separate cash box doors.

Color monitors could be found in almost every game, which I'm not sure enhances player appeal. Controls are reduced to a minimum. Since most games had the same conceptualization used in games like *Space Invaders* and *Head On*, player

control was reduced to a stick or a series of buttons.

No matter how similar some of the games might look, all of them have shown some interesting variation. This season will certainly bring new location winners, from electro-mechanical, black and white, color, to vector monitors. Check them out carefully at your distributor.

The allure of the looks, sadly, sometimes masks poor manufacturing. However, the physical observation of equipment doesn't always determine performance in everyday operation. A mechanism that looks sturdy, well designed and built, might show flaws not noticed before. Hence, the importance of field testing and feedback from the operator can't be overemphasized.

What intrigues me, however, is the fact that many predictable problems do pass engineering. Sometimes it also seems that little attention is given to field service. How would a design engineer feel having to crawl behind a video game and through a very limited opening (unless other assemblies are disassembled, which is sometimes impractical in certain locations) reach for a front bezel or dash board?

Of course, the crowd and temperature does not affect the technician, who faces several nuts to be unscrewed, again, in a very small space. After minutes of struggling, the sweat dripping face breaks into a victorious smile only to realize that a bad crimped terminal was the reason for the service call. At least, you've repaired the problem. Now, you've got to reassemble the whole damn thing.

Just in case the failure occurs again, all wires are soldered to the terminals. The reason why plug-in terminals should be used instead of straight wire soldering (and so many other examples) is quite confusing—the answer often lies in the repairman's stoicism and preference for self-redesign.

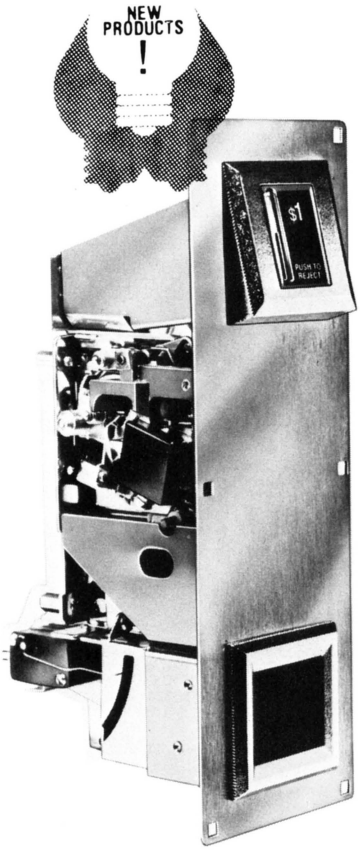
The routine maintenance in an average operation, since the electronic pinball was introduced, has slowly reversed its modus operandi tasks. In the beginning, board replacement was most common, with distributors unwillingly stacking them up and U.P.S. increasing its profits until manufacturers realized that there should be an upgrade in education of the average technician in the field.

Slowly the repair level changed. The industry expansion and consequent job openings drew technicians from the commercial electronic field. This revolution—or evolution—has stirred the dynamics of a fairly conservative business, with the same conservative tendencies widening the gap between the new and old generation of technicians. Since only the larger operators can afford the high salaries of better qualified personnel, the small operator has to rely mainly upon his area distributor.

As equipment becomes more and more sophisticated (the cries of *Kiss* and the devilish groans of *Gorgar* are typical examples), the distributor faces increased costs in his operations. In order to support his local business, the parts and services department of distributors everywhere are enlarging but not at the same rate the industry is expanding.

And that is what this AMOA Convention show was all about—innovations and new engineering technologies which will determine the levels of field repair service. What will be emphasized more, I think, will be the link between profitability and proper service. I certainly enjoy the relationship and what I foresee as the shape of things to come.

In the upper picture, Kimco of Mentor, Ohio, a service equipment supplier, displays its wares at the AMOA. In the lower picture, the folks at Viza were some of the few who allowed show-goers a peek into game cabinets.



No Sue Buck blues at Coin Controls

The Susan B. Anthony dollar coin may be posing problems to some manufacturers, but Coin Controls Ltd. of England reports that they have the problem well under control.

The Oldham-based company has designed three and four entry coin doors which allows it, company officials report, to offer a "tried and proven" package for European made games.

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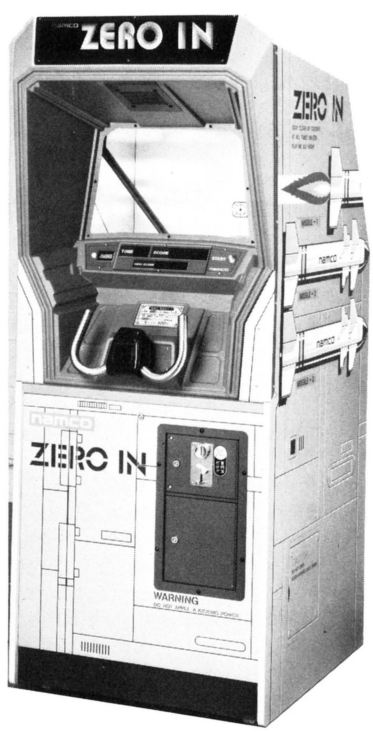
Namco zeroes in

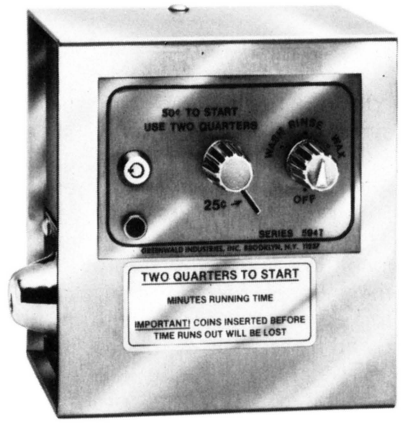
Is it a follow-up to such arcade pieces as *F-1*, *Shoot-Away*, and *Clay-Champ*? Namco Limited seems to think it has found the peer in *Zero-in*...

Utilizing Namco's exclusive projection system, this one-player upright captures the drama and excitement of modern jet-age aerial combat, as the player becomes an ace fighter pilot, chasing down elusive enemy fighters through banks of clouds at MACH-3 speed.

Upon zeroing-in on his target, the player fires high velocity missiles from a fire button located on his control sticks. When an enemy jet is hit, the 3-D zoom-in explosing effect occurs, filling nearly the entire screen.

Zero-in debuted at the AMOA Exposition this year and now is in production.





Greenwald variations on a theme

Greenwald Industries engineers have been busy redesigning their series 5947 stainless steel meter in Brooklyn, New York.

The mechanism and door assembly of the series 5947 is now permanently imprinted with characters etched in black paint. As part of the door design, a small square depression is incorporated into a small variable "price" and "amount-of-coins" decal.

The decal, which is easily affixed, may say, for example, "75 cents to start '3'-quarters". Simply remove the protection peel on the back of the decal, applying finger pressure, and allowing the decal to set approximately 24 hours to affix.

A vend change can also be made in the field by applying a new price and amount-of-coins decal and using Multi-Coin Start Kit #1523 to change the mechanical operation of the 5900P mechanism.

In addition, there are three separate stainless steel decals for door assemblies which use a series 1900 Rotary Selector switch which are used to re-identify the functions marked on the basic door. For example, a change from "Wash-rinse-wax-tire clean-off," with the appropriate 1900 series assembly, can be done by covering the existing markings with a separate etched stainless steel decal. With this method, one door design can be used for several different 1900 Rotary Selector switch assemblies.

Atari Scores with Soccer

Atari's latest contribution to the games industry is its new *Soccer*, which utilizes the "trak-ball" principle.

The game offers two or four player action.

In a four-player contest, each two-man team plays cooperatively against an opposing two-man squad. Each team plays with two controllable players, one computer-controlled player and a computer-controlled goalie.

In a two-player game, each opposing player controls one man assisted by a computer-controlled player and computer-controlled goalie.

New play action features were developed by Atari engineers along with pro soccer advisors.

Players may select a "kick/pass" option which allows the player with the ball to kick in the direction he is facing or force a pass from a teammate who has the ball.

The "offsides" option limits an offensive player from receiving a pass from a teammate unless there are at least two defensive players between him and the goal. The penalty is a free kick.

Other features include an "add-a-coin" accumulator that enables players to buy extra time, optional language presentations, adjustable game times, and coinage options.

The final chapter in the games space race?

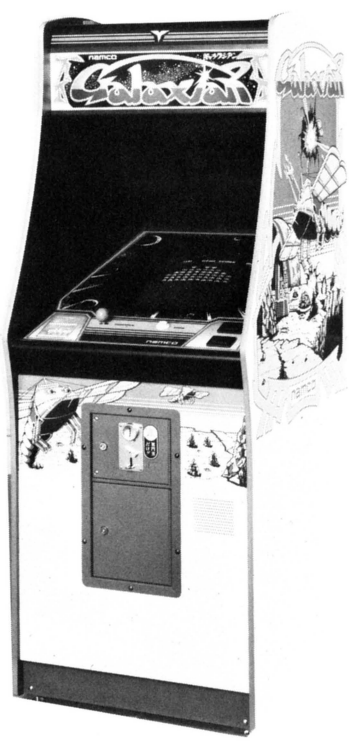
Namco Limited recently introduced what it hopes is the "last word in galactic space adventure"—*Galaxian*.

This video version of the popular space wars phenomemon features a color monitor, and is available in one and two-player upright or cocktail table sizes.

The player, controlling the Galaxian defenders of the Earth, must destroy a convoy of aliens equally determined to annihilate him by firing missiles without the aid of barricades, and by shooting down not only alien army regulars but by also out-maneuvering enemy fighter escort ships that peel-off from the main body of the alien squadron at random.

When all aliens are shot down, more convoys re-appear on the screen for as long as the three original Galaxian defender ships remain intact, with a bonus Galaxship awarded for an operator adjustable score.

Galaxian, for those of you who did not make it by, was at the recent AMOA Exposition in Chicago.



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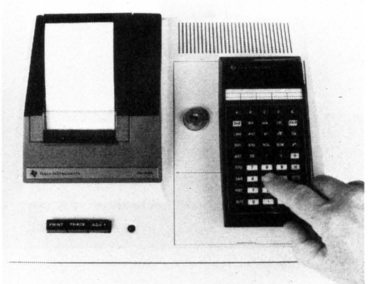


Hohenstein helps make bookkeeping simple

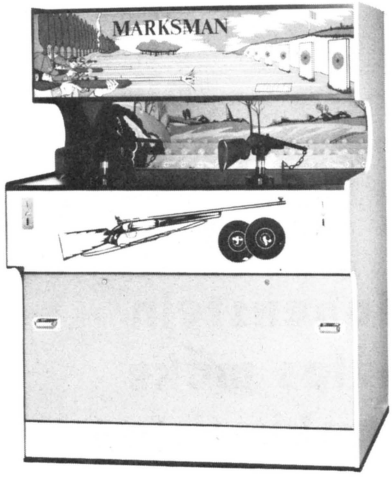
Hohenstein Associates of Atlanta say that expense distribution time can be cut up to half with the Texas Instrument PC-100A programmable microprocessor system with the Hohenstein program. Sort expenses in up to 89 numbered accounts—direct from check vouchers or any other source.

Information entered is printed on paper tape showing check number, account number, and dollar amount. Distribution summary prints showing the accumulated entry totals for each account and a control total of the overall amount.

The distribution program is recorded on magnetic cards for use with the TI 59 programmable calculator with printer, and is a good cost reducing method for both large and small businesses, manufacturers report. While primarily designed for expense distribution, distribution of any other amount or quantity is equally easy—such as income distribution by income source, unit sales distributed by product number, etc.

The system is available as a complete system (TI 59 calculator, printer and program), or program and instructions alone for users who already own a TI 59 programmable calculator and printer.

Hohenstein Associates is the suppliers for the program.



Streets' Marksman takes its best shot

Many folks don't believe that a machine first produced over 20 years ago can hold its own with the latest technological developments.

But Streets Automatic Machine Company Limited of Eastbourne, England, produced its electric mechanical rifles over 20 years ago, and while the outward appearance has changed over the years, scenery, cabinet finish, top flashes—the basic machine—remains unchanged.

It is because of its simplicity of manufacture, Streets contends, that makes it so popular with arcade operators both in England and Europe from a service point of view.

The latest version of the Streets game is the *Marksman*, currently one of the top earners in the famous Piccadilly Amusements in the heart of London's West End, company officials report.

The *Marksman* was on display with a selection of cranes and merchandisers in New Orleans at the Parks Show.

Gremlin debuts Head On conversion

In the spring of 1979, Gremlin Industries, Inc. introduced the first MultiPhase game of its kind, *Head On*, a computer road game which presents progressive sequences of challenges. During the last six months, Gremlin has experienced increased world-wide sales of the product to the point that *Head On* can be found in arcades and street locations throughout the United States, Canada and Europe.

Head On is now available for one and two players. Presently in operation throughout the world, the dual format is showing significant revenue gains to operators of arcades, Gremlin notes.

The company is presently delivering complete games to its various distributors as well as a special "Eprom" kit which is used for converting *Head On* from single play to dual.

As in the original *Head On*, top scores can be recorded on the video display panel, affording the opportunity for players to keep returning to beat or match the record.

The health fiend's dream...

Following its first supersize pinball, *Paragon*, Bally Pinball Division released *Future Spa*, its second supersize model.

Future Spa contains several new features, including a visual, prismatic light effect on the backglass, a new feature for players.

Bally has included a new on-board microprocessor sound system on this release. This sound package offers three sound modes to choose from, including a steadily increasing background with special feature sounds unique to certain point values.

Future Spa has an exciting playfield with five ways to light the "F-U-T-U-R-E S-P-A" for points, bonus, super bonus, and special. There is a top arrow gate feature allowing extended play and a left kicker feature as well. Bally has also included its "in-line" drop targets skill shots on this game.

The futuristic health spa theme is in tune with today's fitness phenomenon, Bally feels.

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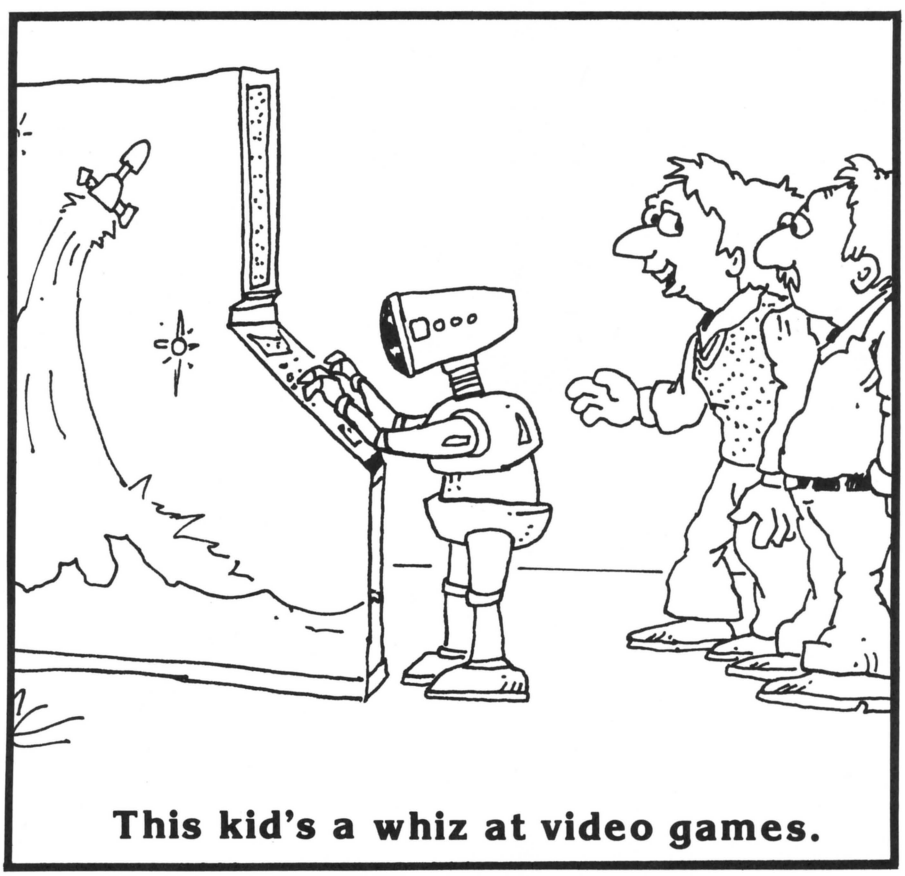

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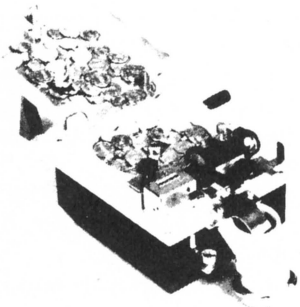

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News Briefs

Two new concepts in video games, Mini-Video and Dual, were unveiled at the Gremlin presentation at the Essex Inn in Chicago the day before the AMOA show opened. Mini-Video features a compact cabinet measuring 22 x 21 x 20 inches and slide-out interchangeable drawers which can accommodate six Gremlin games. Dual features two games contained in one cabinet, a significant characteristic in some areas such as Holland, which has legal limits on the number of amusement machines a cafe may have.....See the December issue of UPDATE for complete details.

The C.A. Robinson Company's west coast product presentation was concluded successfully at the end of November. The dinner, held once again the night before the show at Jimmy's in Beverly Hills, is the only annual social event which almost all major manufacturers attend. A high point of the show was the Bally booth where one of the Harlem Globetrotters was on hand to promote the Bally game of the same name. Dolly Parton records also were handed out. Approximately 900 people attended the sixth annual west coast exhibition, an increase of about thirty percent, Robinson company officials noted.....

Philip Moss and Company will represent the Irving Kaye line of pool tables in the midwest territories that they represent. The Des Moines-based distributors also maintain offices in Omaha and Kansas City. Two Irving Kaye products that Philip Moss now will distribute will be the Silver Shadow and Lion's Head tables.....

Marshall Caras, formerly of Philip Moss and Company in Des Moines, Iowa, has left his post with that company to accept employment with a "manufacturing concern of substantial size."

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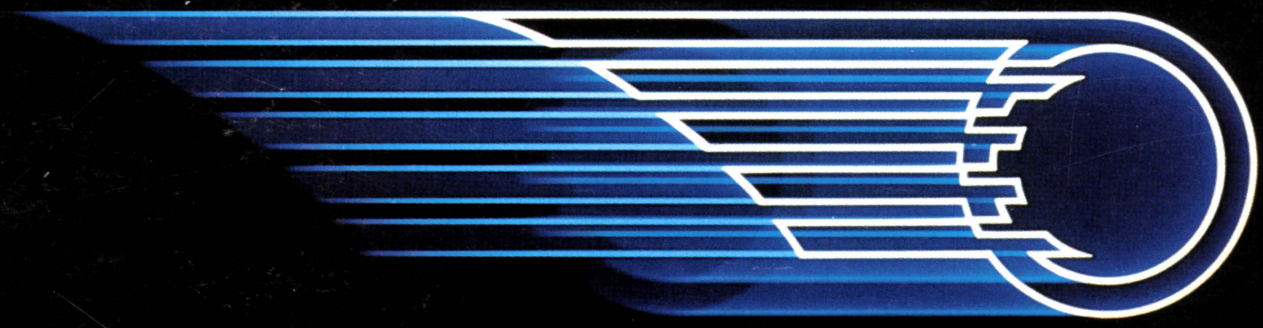

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